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Lutheran World

Vol. I, No. 2

The Task of Lutheran Theology in Evanston

EDMUND SCHLINK

Our Oneness in Christ and our Disunity as Churches

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Christ — the Hope of Those Who are Outside the Church

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New Books

HANS W. GENSICHEN

Official
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CONTENTS

	Page
Edmund Schlink: The Task of Lutheran Theology in Evanston	86
Vilmos Vajta: Our Oneness in Christ and our Disunity as Churches	98
Taito A. Kantonen: Christ—the Hope of Those Who are Outside the Church	112
Erich Thier: Christ's Community and Her Social Responsibility	127
Olov Hartman: The Christian in His Vocation	136

NEW BOOKS

Luther's View of the Church (Hans W. Gensichen)	150
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FROM THE WORK OF THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

<i>World Missions</i>	
Post-war development of Lutheran missions in Tanganyika	158
<i>World-Service</i>	
First Year of LWF Department of World Service	160

FROM LANDS AND CHURCHES

<i>Germany:</i>	
Rejoicing in Hope	164
<i>Iceland:</i>	
Visit of the LWF Executive Secretary to the Church of Iceland	166
<i>Yugoslavia:</i>	
Rebuilding Churches in Yugoslavia	169
About this Issue	172
Our Contributors	inside back cover

LUTHERAN WORLD

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

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We should pray, to begin with, that God our Heavenly Father might have a merciful regard for His Holy Christian Church and the communion of all believers, to protect and guard them from all unbelief and error; and that He might touch them and perfect them in His Holy Word, in right faith, in inflexible hope, and in fervent Christian love. We should also urgently beseech God our Heavenly Father that, through His Holy Spirit, He may enlighten all preachers of His Word, all shepherds and watchers over His Christian lambs, and strengthen them in His Word that they be courageous and circumspect, and also faithful, that the wolf of hell not surprise, injure, and disperse the flock of Christ.

Primarily we should also pray for all worldly authorities into whose hand the sword was given by God to preserve justice and to punish iniquity, that we may live with them in peace and quietness among one another; that they should all govern so as to defend widows and orphans, protect land and people, and administer a common peace and profit; that they should also order and direct all their counsels and laws according to the agreeable Word of God.

For all those in sorrow, affliction, or distress, that God may comfort and strengthen them in His Holy Word, and that they continue in patience.

For all women great with child, that God may grant them a joyful birth, and to the fruit a true faith and Christian baptism.

For all the fruits of the earth, that God may protect them and guard them for our necessity.

The souls of our ancestors and all the deceased who have passed away in the true faith and in knowledge of Christ are not dead, but they sleep and rest in Christ the Lord. This saying is unto us all a consolation and an admonition that we who still stand in life should, as their members, turn all seriousness and diligence to beseech God that we, too, may pass hence in Christian faith, to the rest of the blessed; and that, when the hour of death shall come, we shall then go to meet our consort and spouse Christ joyfully and with the burning light of a true faith, and be led by Him into the Kingdom prepared for us by our Heavenly Father. Amen.

Leo Jud,

Exhortations towards God, as communally occur in the Christian assembly. 1524.

EDMUND SCHLINK

The Task of Lutheran Theology in Evanston

When, in 1950, the members of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches eyed the theme "Jesus Christ our Lord, the only Hope of the Church and the World" for the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Evanston, they surely did not think that with this they might precipitate the World Council into a dangerous adventure. At first, many apparently understood this theme only as a watchword, something to give a Christian uplift to the people of our time in the midst of their danger, perplexity, and fear. That is why many were startled when the preparatory work of the Advisory Commission demonstrated that this theme must unavoidably be dealt with as an eschatological one, if it is to be taken seriously from a biblical and theological point of view.

The difficulties which confront any attempt to deal with the eschatological subject in the World Council are, however, of a strange order. For they are not primarily difficulties which exist between different churches. In the eschatological assertions contained in the dogmas and confessional writings of the diverse denominations we find, on the contrary, a high measure of agreement, far more so than, for instance, in the doctrine of grace, the understanding of the sacraments or that of the Church. There are, indeed, certain differences concerning the question of the intermediate stage. But beyond that it is possible to establish within Christendom a very impressive consensus in the problem of eschatology—a consensus of the official confessional writings and dogmas. Despite this, there now appear great and exciting differences which do not indicate a separation of the churches, but which run right through most of the denominations. Thus, for instance, the differences and contrasts in eschatological doctrine which currently appear within the Lutheran theological faculties in Germany are greater than the differences which existed at the time of the Reformation between any of the separate churches.

Under such circumstances one may seriously inquire whether the World Council with its very slender common christological basis ought to have tackled the eschatological subject, or whether it did

not here run the risk of breaking apart. Looking back upon the Advisory Commission's three year effort and on its present three reports, one will, however, gratefully acknowledge that in this very intensive ecumenical collaboration there was attained a community of witness to the Christian hope which has refuted the original fears. What matters now is that the delegates to the World Council Assembly should also arrive at such a community of perception and of witness and, indeed, deepen it beyond what has been formulated thus far.

Three Basic Issues in the Preparatory Work on the General Theme of Evanston

1. The first issue was the question of the correct FORMULATION OF THE THEME of the World Council's Assembly. In 1950 the Central Committee had considered as a theme "Jesus Christ Our Lord, the Only Hope of Church and World". But with more detailed discussion in the Advisory Commission, this formulation appeared to be problematical in several respects. That is why this commission, on the basis of its first meeting, made a new suggestion for the drafting of the theme: "The Crucified Lord, the Hope for the World." In this, the following were guiding considerations:

The theme should coerce attention, should not be too long, should not say the self-evident nor anticipate the results of the Assembly. Rather, it should confront hearers and readers with a question which will entice them to ponder, to search for an answer themselves and then truly to study the reports of the World Council's General Assembly with their answer. For just this is indeed not self-evident, that one crucified is the hope of the world.

Moreover, the following point of view was determinative: One must testify to Jesus Christ particularly as the One Crucified, since there is widespread danger of expecting worldly prosperity from His name or, at least, security by the circumvention of His cross and of His commandment to take up the cross. Paul characterized the whole gospel of Christ as the word of the cross. Thus the particularizing of the "Crucified" denotes Christ's whole work of salvation. Again, "Lord" in the New Testament means: The resurrected, the raised, the one sitting on the right hand of God, the one who will come again.

Finally, this suggested theme refrained from naming the Church and spoke merely of the "hope of the world". For this theme is to be

dealt with by an ecumenical church conference which is to address a message to the world. But a host of problems are hidden in that little word "and" ("hope of Church and World"): For Christ is not in quite the same manner the hope of the Church and the hope of the world. He is the hope for the Church and the world, but not the hope of the world. For only the Church hopes upon Christ, but not the world.

This new suggestion for a theme was then discussed in the Central Committee of the World Council, but was not accepted. Instead, "Christ—the Hope of the World" was decided upon. Reasons for that were as follows: The younger churches had at first enthusiastically agreed to the theme: "The Crucified Lord, the Hope for the World." But then a protest ensued, precisely from the area of the younger churches, namely from India: There they had reached a stage in which a myth is being created out of Gandhi's death. Should the theme now name only "The Crucified Lord", Christ would appear merely as a parallel to Gandhi and the theme itself would not break out of this sphere of myth. Only with the naming of the Risen One would Christ be distinguished from the mythical heroes of this world. But if one goes so far as to say: "The crucified and risen", then one cannot deny the Anglicans if they now want to include also the incarnation in the formulation of the theme. In short, the whole second article of the Apostle's Creed would have gone into the theme of the conference—and at this point one simply decided on: "Christ—the Hope of the World."

This new formulation wants to hold fast, by all means, to what the earlier theme meant with: "The Crucified Lord." But the danger remains that in the mass-discussions in Evanston one will slide back into a general slogan. Moreover, one will have to point out the whole problem of the "of the world". For the "of" cannot mean a subjective genitive in the sense that it is the world that hopes. Rather, one will want to interpret it in the sense of "hope for the world". But is Christ the hope for the world? This question, too, one will not be able to answer undialectically with "yes"; for the world shall pass away. Christ is hope for the world in so far as the world will be changed, in so far as creation, degenerated in the world, will reach its goal in the new creation. This whole problem of world, creation, new creation, is hidden by the "of".

2. The problem which naturally played the greatest rôle in the preparatory work was the ESCHATOLOGICAL PROBLEM OF HISTORY. The result which the Advisory Commission has obtained in this area can perhaps best be made clear by briefly calling to mind the most important eschatologic positions of more recent theology

and then showing in each case what decisions the Commission has taken in its report.

a) Well-known is the understanding of the kingdom of God as moral and religious progress of humanity inherent in history. Here the kingdom of God is not a final historical crisis of the history of mankind including its moral and religious progress; rather, it is the development of mankind within history, leading to perfection of its society and its mastery over nature. This is the view which flows in a broad stream through the history of newer Protestant theology, from Kant via Albrecht Ritschl to the „social gospel“. This view, though still operative to-day in America, has at the same time been considerably shaken; and this, indeed, not only because of the theological protest of individuals, but through the world-wide historical events of recent times as a whole. This shock goes deeper with American Christians than the average European expects.

It is important to know that this understanding of the kingdom of God as progress immanent in history did not find a place among the conclusions of the Advisory Commission but was specifically excluded.

b) Well-known is, further, the understanding of eschatology as the doctrine of a development in the history of salvation in the sense of Johann Tobias Beck, J. C. K. von Hofmann and Auberlen. (The late Prelate Hartenstein of the Church of Württemberg also took this line in his stand on the Evanston theme.) The above named have in common an understanding of the history of salvation as an organic economic development. They also share a certain rationalization of the eschatological event, brought about by the use of organic patterns and gradated scales. This school has also used the „prophecy and fulfilment“ pattern and has largely rationalized it. As a result, the utterly surprising novelty of eschatologic fulfilment was diminished and the unmitigated completeness of the end-of-time was softened and, correspondingly, so was the crisis in church history. We all know that we owe much to these theologians of the history of salvation. But this must not prevent us from recognizing clearly that we must let our thinking be challenged much more forcibly by this totally different newness of the eschatological event.

In the Commission's report is found an apparent aversion to systematizations and rationalizations on the basis of the history of salvation, though the history of salvation as such is not disputed.

c) „Consequent eschatology“ has gained importance in two directions and in totally different ways. For history it represented the discovery of Jesus' eschatology as one which was dramatic, dualistic, concerned with the end-of-time and determined entirely by the

sovereignty of divine action. For systematics it signified, at the same time, the abolition of Jesus' eschatology, that is to say it denied that this might still have value for men of our time. For Jesus' eschatological "near at hand" expectation was refuted by continuing history. Thus the significant historical discovery of consequent eschatology has not been brought to bear systematically, either by Albert Schweitzer, nor by his pupils Werner and Buri. With Johannes Weiss the same thing had already become apparent, for he did, indeed, refute historically Albrecht Ritschl's (his father-in-law's) understanding of the kingdom of God, but he nevertheless remained essentially true to him in system and theology. Whether you finally deviate from the idea of moral and religious progress inherent in history, either into mysticism like Schweitzer or into existentialism like Werner and Buri, will hardly matter in comparison with completely different New Testament eschatology.

The systematic positions of the advocates of consequent eschatology are not found in the report of the Preparatory Commission. However, the historical results of consequent eschatology are, on the whole, assumed — with the exception of the problem of time. Concerning the historical question of the "near at hand" expectation of Jesus, that is to say, the date on which Jesus counted, different conclusions than those of Schweitzer, Werner, and Bultmann have been reached to-day by, for example, Oscar Cullmann and Werner Kümmel. Thus the historical findings of consequent eschatology are being affirmed, in the main, but not its assertion that Jesus' eschatology has been confuted by later world history.

d) Well-known is, further, the understanding of eschatology as an existential recognition in the present of the actual event of revelation. This was Paul Althaus' position in the year 1922, Karl Barth's in the second edition of his commentary on Romans of the same year—and still in his interpretation of the First Epistle to the Corinthians—and it is the position of Rudolf Bultmann. It cannot be missed, as Sweden's Holmström has shown in his book on "Eschatological Thought of the Present Time" that these three theologians were then strongly under the influence of neo-Kantianism (Althaus especially under that of Windelband). When they held these positions they had in common the reduction of the eschatologic event to the "Jeweils" (each individual particular occasion) of the crisis coming to pass under God's revelation. With that they also agreed on a rejection of final history, of the "drama of the end-of-time". As is well-known, Althaus and Barth have abandoned this position. Bultmann is the only one of these three who has held to it to this day.

In the report, the recognition of God's eschatologic act in the present through word and sacrament has been stressed most vigorously. But this was done without rejecting the eschatology of the end-of-time, in contrast to Bultmann as well as the early Althaus and Barth.

e) Further, we must here consider the theory of realized eschatology as developed by Dodd: The expectation of the kingdom of God has already been realized in Church and world by the coming of Jesus. In his interpretation of the parables Dodd placed the New Testament assertions concerned with the future into the service of those concerned with perfection and with the present, and he re-interpreted and eliminated accordingly. This position of Dodd's is close to that of Bultmann and the early Althaus and Barth, in that the eschatology of the end-of-time is being dissolved. And yet there is a considerable difference here: With Dodd the presence of the eschaton is not primarily an occurrence in the hearing of the divine word, but it is ecclesiologically-sacramental. In this connection it is understood, not primarily as existentially actual, but ontologically. The reality of the end of time is actually present within the reality of this world through the action of the Holy Spirit; it operates and reaches out of the Church into the history of the world at large. In the meantime Dodd, like Althaus and Barth, did not remain with this position. To the surprise of most of the members of the Commission Dodd, on himself becoming a member of the Commission in 1952, showed himself much more open to end-of-time eschatology than could have been expected on the basis of his earlier publications. (See his "The Coming Christ" in which he sets forth the expectation of the end-of-time, cautiously, indeed, but unmistakably.)

The report of the Commission for Evanston has received this "realized eschatology" positively, but without rejecting end-of-time expectation.

f) One can designate as "futuristic eschatology" that one-sided expectation of the future which re-interprets as mere expectations the assertions of the New Testament which concern themselves with perfection and the present. On the whole, such a futuristic eschatology is expanding today, and that as a reaction against a re-interpretation which understands eschatology as real only in the urgency of the individual's decision or in the presence, through the Holy Spirit, of the kingdom of God in the Church today. The report is thoroughly concerned with the end of time, but it is not one-sidedly futuristic.

Looking back upon these most important eschatological positions,

one may summarize and judge as follows: The stand-point of the eschatologic statements of the last report of the Preparatory Commission for Evanston is characterized by the three positions d, e, f—or, with other words, by grouping together actually present, ontologically present, and the futuristic end-of-time eschatologies. Each of the three named positions is changed considerably by this “togetherness”, since each of them first appeared as exclusive. The grouping of these three positions does however, outline the area within which the manifold eschatologic statements of the New Testament are found.

Naturally, plenty of questions remain open within the grouping-together of these three last-named positions; and there remains the possibility of very different accents and individual answers. Nevertheless, considerable clarification and important progress have been attained here, in the face of the confusion of modern eschatological theses. To repeat: A consensus has appeared in the work of the Commission which today many denominations cannot achieve without much further effort within the ranks of their own theologians.

For the rest, it is characteristic of the report that it consciously refrains from a separation of individual and universal eschatology. It was agreed that the salvation of the individual may not be set apart from the expectation of redemption for the whole people of God and the transformation of the cosmos. This has had the result that there was so much talk of the body of Christ and of the inclusiveness of all creation that many a justified problem of the individual Christian's eschatological expectation was pushed into the background in the report. But we counted on it that this will surely be made up during the continued discussion, since most people are only too interested in this. At all events, it must be noted that universal and individual eschatology may not be separated. These two results, the grouping-together of the final three positions and, further, the “interwovenness” of individual and universal eschatology should be maintained in Evanston at all cost.

It should, finally, be of interest that within this community there remained a rather important tension. Karl Barth could really understand the end-of-time event only as end-of-time unveiling of a deliverance already accomplished by Christ, but not as a new deed of God through which something new will be achieved. This quite corresponds with his teaching on baptism and, beyond that, with his doctrine of atonement, according to which all men have already been reconciled through Christ's death and have died and risen with Christ, whether they believe on Him or not. In the New Testament,

however, there are two drifts: God will make manifest the new which is now already present, though hidden,—and God will create something new for which we are now still waiting. While Karl Barth opposed the duality of the New Testament statements with a unity which answers his own very specific (noëtic) christological starting-point, the overwhelming majority of the commission members stood by the New Testament duality of the assertions which then found its expression in the report as well.

3. The third problem-area which occupied the Commission—and in which less was accomplished than in the second—it the relationship of *ESCHATOLOGY AND ETHICS*. Again and again, especially with our American friends, we ran into an inference which sounded self-evident: If expectation was of an end-of-time nature, then practical striving would be paralysed. We tried to point out to them that precisely an end-of-time oriented expectation has always set off outstanding impulses, and that not only in the area of waiting, but in those of doing, running, fighting, working. The reply was that this might be evident about exertions in evangelization which, indeed, receives a very strong impulse from eschatologic expectation. But the same thing did not seem similarly evident with regard to political tasks in the widest sense, that is to say, with regard to effort for social, economic, legal order, etc. in which Christians, Pagans, Jews, and Anti-Christians must live together in this our day. There was much discussion about this problem. And there were essentially four theological reasons for political responsibility represented:

a) A christocratic argument appeared within the Commission in several variations (Karl Barth, Visser't Hooft, and others). In a modified form it was put into the second 1952 report and then came up against considerable opposition in the public ecumenical arena. The train of thought ran thus: Precisely because we expect an eternal kingdom of peace, justice, etc., we must commit ourselves to work for peace, justice, etc. in the world. The justifiability of this analogy continued to be disputed, since Christ's coming kingdom of eternal peace and even the very best order of this passing world must be distinguished in many respects.

b) Then, again and again, the basis for political action was sought in the commandment of love. But it was not easily apparent in how far agape might make use of the power of the sword which stands behind all political power, since agape is, after all, a self-surrender of the one who loves to the loved one. Thus the impression was created, time and again, that the commandment of love was being used in a strangely naïve manner. From it no justification could be

deduced for the use of police power for the maintenance of order for a people or the nations.

c) A further reason was the argument deriving from the need of your neighbor. This thought is surely right, but it was developed and understood too exclusively from the personal encounter with the individual fellow-being in need. From this point no path was opened which might lead to the responsibility of the Christian to participate in putting into force or implementing an order of justice, a social order, or even a world order. Thus the avenue to precisely those problems for which the Americans today bear a heavy responsibility in a special way, did not become compellingly clear.

d) Again another attempt at justification derived from the thesis that the theological treatment of these questions of politics and social ethics could not be dealt with on the basis of eschatology alone. That, rather, one must clearly distinguish between the deeds of God the Preserver and God the Redeemer and thus, at the same time, between the commandments of God the Preserver and the Redeemer. In other words: One must distinguish between the two kingdoms. Wingren's reminder tended in this direction; a reminder that Jesus had not only preached but also healed and that His miracles of healing were not only a sign for the very different, new thing that is to come, but that He also, actually, with these miracles gave aid in this world and that, similarly, He also raised the dead for a continuation of their earthly life. The differentiation between the action of God the Preserver and the Redeemer was made significant for the justification of political action and of Christian social ethics with the reminder that, apart from this, the secularization of Christian ethics would be unavoidable.

This whole body of questions regarding the relationship of eschatology and ethics was not discussed to any point of conclusion in the preparatory work for Evanston. Thus the report has remained less satisfying in this respect than with regard to the problems of eschatology and history discussed in second place. Here there did not ensue any clarification or any true agreement. Rather, one remained content to work into the report all these four arguments, so that it contains something of each.

What will Lutherans Want to Maintain in Evanston?

Despite the deficiencies just shown, the preparatory work for Evanston has gone further than could have been hoped at its initiation. The eschatological problems of history and end-of-time, of

present and future salvation, especially, were treated in such a way as corresponds substantially with the witness of the New Testament. This was the result of close collaboration, in the course of three years, by twenty-five selected personalities who were previously completely familiar with the issues and who, for the most part, had already earlier been close to one another personally. When now, in Evanston, several hundred representatives of the churches will come together without similarly favorable conditions and having only a few days at their disposal for their common work on the General Theme, then it may be feared that this result will be made dubious and watered down. The Lutheran theologians, therefore, will have to exert themselves at Evanston to the end of maintaining the biblical substance of the preparatory report and to prevent its being weakened.

Beyond that, however, they will have to set their sights on several points which in the report have not been worked out with sufficient clarity. Even though not entirely missing from the report they are too weakly stressed and do not sufficiently determine the whole:

1. Thus it should be more strongly attested that the world stands under the anger of God and is approaching God's judgement. Christ will come, not only as the Redeemer, but also as the judge of the world. He will break into the world like a thief in the night. He will dive down upon the world like a vulture dives down upon carrion. He will redeem the poor, the hungry, the persecuted; but he will overthrow the rich, the satiated, the doers of violence. He will pronounce a double judgement; to the ones: "Come unto me, you blessed!" and to the others: „Depart from me!" He will accept and reject. His coming will bring resurrection to life and to death. All these New Testament statements must be taken seriously to a much higher degree. The report, throughout, shies away from clearly recognizing the double judgement which both the world and also the Church are going to face. In the foreground of the report does not stand the reformation question: How do I escape God's anger? How will I endure before God's judgement seat? Here the report may show the after-effects of the original form of the question which expected from the theme of Christian hope, above all, a lift in the struggle with the threats of this world. In this the concern was not the question: "How do we endure before God?", but "how shall we endure in the face of new historical catastrophes by war, atom bomb, etc.?" More pointedly: How do we preserve the world? This question was, indeed, overcome in the Preparatory Commission, but it still echoes, perhaps, in the accents of the report.

2. The concept "world" has not been taken up, generally, in its New Testament severity, namely, as the very essence of creation enslaved by death and the powers of corruption, disfigured by sin, separated from God. The creation as God's good creation is not called "world" in the Bible, but "heaven and earth" or "things visible and invisible" or "all things". Again, nowhere in the New Testament is the eschatological creation referred to as "new world", but as "new earth and new heaven", as "new creation", and similarly. To prevent vagueness, the word "world" should be used in Evanston exclusively in the New Testament sense of the word "cosmos". That means that the difference between God's good creation and the world, as well as between eschatological creation and the world, would have to be worked out more vigorously and, together with this, the contrast between God and world as well as Christ and world.

3. Closely connected with this is the fact that the significance of the cross of Christ was not set forth essentially as would be required if you took seriously the divine judgement. Of course, the testimony of the cross of Jesus Christ is not missing. Again and again it was pointed out in the preparatory report. Again and again, also, it was expressed during the preparatory negotiations: *Crux unica spes*. And yet, the declarations in question should not be fully sufficient to one who has been shaken by the seriousness of the divine judgement. Here too, we find perhaps an after-effect of the fact that deliverance in the original question had been understood and expected not so much as deliverance in God's judgement, that is to say as forgiveness, absolution, justification, but rather as deliverance in the midst of the threats of this world and thus, primarily, from the threats to men by other men. More pointedly: The expectation in the original question was directed towards an ethical transformation of men by Christ to the end of achieving a communal life with as little disturbance as possible in human society. Here too, it can be said that this question, concerned internally with the world, was overcome in the work of the Commission, but that it perhaps still throws a shadow in the form of individual emphases in the report. Accordingly, one may note in the report an unwillingness to discuss the "signs of the end" which, according to the testimony of the New Testament consist in a special way of distress, persecution, and suffering of the congregation. The consoling sense of such New Testament assertions becomes visible only in connection with the full New Testament witness to Christ's sufferings in which the believers participate in their suffering. This suffering-with-Christ is not judgement and therefore not to be fled. Rather, it is cause for joy and boasting.

4. The separation of the two kingdoms is not clearly carried through—despite all rejection of an understanding of the kingdom of God as progress inherent in history and despite all the stress on the newness of the act of God at the end of time. This is why the report does not penetrate to a conception of the law and is therefore not capable of rendering a clear justification of worldly vocation. The separation of law and gospel is a subject hardly mentioned in the report, and there is no attempt at all to deal with it conceptually. In these four points Lutheran theologians will find a special responsibility during their participation in the Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Evanston. There the report ought to be deepened. In this, the Lutheran theologians may have certainty that they are not exerting themselves for the sake of confessional peculiarities but for the validity of elementary assertions of the New Testaments.

We are, indeed, certain that we are God's children, that eternal life has been given us, that death has been trodden underfoot, that sin is gone and the devil is captive. Nevertheless, I do not see this yet; but I feel the reverse, that the devil besets me . . . But over there it will be such that I, too, shall thus see it. Sin will be blotted out. There, then, will be a revealed kingdom, and all such things will be clear, just as we already now believe. The treasure is there now, hidden under covers. Later, He will cast away the covers. This is what Paul means when he says: "he (then) delivers the kingdom to God the Father."

MARTIN LUTHER Sermon on 1 Cor. 15. 1532

VILMOS VAJTA

Our Oneness in Christ and our Disunity as Churches

On the theme of the Commission on Faith and Order
at the Evanston Assembly

The expression "oneness in Christ" has frequently been used during the past years at ecumenical conferences and meetings. We shall have to ask ourselves what the true meaning of this expression is. Does it designate a unity of the churches that exists here and now, or do those who use this expression merely desire to escape the tragic reality of "our disunity as churches"? The term seems to be used to designate a unity that exists in spite of our disunity and, as it were, behind or below it. Does its use, then, show a desire to escape from the Church to "Christ as God and Saviour"? Or is it, rather, the expression of a bold faith that could be of incalculable value in overcoming "our disunity as churches"?

The Problem

It has been said again and again that the churches' experience has shown that we cannot simply regard one another as "separated", i. e. separated from one another and from the Church of Christ. Thirty years of solid ecumenical cooperation and, beyond that, the common struggle of so many churches against the anti-Christian state have created a new situation. This situation, it is said, can have but one meaning, namely that God the Holy Ghost has helped the denominations to learn from one another and to deepen their faith in the one Lord Jesus Christ. But is it true that these experiences have made one church of us or, at least, have brought us so close one to another that we must seriously doubt whether a permanent and evident "disunity as churches" is justified? Or, to put it differently, is it possible simply to ignore recent church history? These and similar problems must be raised when we try to probe into the meaning of the terms "Our Oneness in Christ and our Disunity as Churches". The question might also

be formulated thus: Is the theme meant to describe the member churches of the World Council of Churches? Is it possible to posit their "oneness in Christ" in spite of their "disunity as churches"? What are the conceptions that underlie formulations such as these? If our unity in Christ does not imply that we are also united as churches, or if it does not follow from our disunity as churches that we are also divided in Christ, we are faced with theological and ecclesiastical problems that need further investigation. The Evanston Assembly should not pass these problems by.

The constitution of the World Council of Churches expresses "our oneness in Christ" by saying that the member churches confess Christ to be "God and Saviour". However, a confession so formulated may give rise to different interpretations. In any case, it seems highly improbable that the member churches of the World Council are at one in their interpretation. If they were at one, their "unity as churches" would have become a fact. Yet this unity is at present no more than an ultimate goal.

The Unity of Church and World

There can be no doubt that the statement on "Christ as God and Saviour" implies that Christ's divine Lordship and His work of redemption are universal. God has sent His Son into a hostile world, but this hostility in no way invalidates Christ's claim to be our Lord and God or the efficacy of His redemption. Christ is God and Saviour whether He is recognized and confessed as such or not. Even in this respect it would therefore be possible to speak of "our oneness in Christ" except that in this context the term would not designate the oneness of the church but merely the universality of redemption, i. e. the fact that Christ has done something that affects humanity and human existence as a whole. Even the hostile world that does not confess Christ as God and Saviour is ultimately and inescapably related to Him. Both those who confess Christ and those who deny Him shall on the last day appear before His throne, where He will judge the quick and the dead, both believers and unbelievers. Naturally, none but the church can confess this oneness in Christ with the whole sinful world. Furthermore, the church not only can do so but must do so, since it, too, is part and parcel of Adam's race, of the old aeon. It has not been received into the Lordship and redemption of Christ because it is without sin, but quite to the contrary, because its sin has been graciously forgiven. As long as it is conscious of this grace

—which is nothing else than God's gracious election—it cannot but confess its unity in Christ with the sinful world.

However, it is obvious that there is another interpretation of Christ's Lordship and redemption, which is not compatible with the former, since it contradicts what is essential to that other interpretation, i. e. our unity in Christ with the world. If the church does not view its existence in this world as being determined by the old aeon and by the struggle with the powers of destruction, then it is no longer one with Christ, who proves his oneness with sinful and lost humanity by willingly walking the way of suffering, sacrifice and pain until the last day. A church that thinks of itself here and now as the eschatological people of God, as the wheat already separated from the chaff, has misunderstood its true situation and has, in the last analysis, abandoned Christ as its God and Saviour.

No Oneness in Christ without Unity of the Church

The confession that Christ is God and Saviour implies the universality of redemption. If this universality is to be retained, the unity of the church must be sought elsewhere. After all, our oneness in Christ within the World Council of Churches is meant to be more than our oneness with all humanity in view of Christ's claim to Lordship and His work of redemption. We believe that over and above this unity and as a result of Christ's victorious resurrection and ascension, the church receives the gift of His redemption through His Word and Sacraments and that until the last day He will continue to bestow upon us the benefits of His death and resurrection. Through His Holy Spirit, Christ is present in His Church as God and Saviour and He will victoriously accomplish His work until the last day. As churches we can therefore at all times confess "our oneness in Christ" in view of His gracious presence among us. But this means that our unity in Christ is conditioned by and dependent upon what the Holy Spirit does in and through the Church. The message of reconciliation, the washing of regeneration, the Lord's Table—through all these the Lord of the Church joins us together in a communion (*koinonia*) in which we receive redemption, become partakers of the Spirit, and are thus made one body, the Body of Christ. Herein lies our oneness as the Church of Jesus Christ.

All this means that our unity in Christ must not be viewed from a spiritualistic angle. The churches cannot escape the reality of their divisions by seeking a unity in Christ that would be independent of

the communion of preaching, Baptism and Holy Communion. Christ is not to be found apart from these means of grace. The Holy Spirit is not the spirit of an "inward" or subjective spirituality. Rather does He come to us through the natural gifts of the human voice, the water of baptism, the bread and the wine. It is not possible to confess Christ and to despise the instruments of the Spirit. There can be no communion with Christ without communion with and within the church. Thus also there can be no "oneness in Christ" without unity of the church. The unity that Christians enjoy in Christ is manifested in their common hearing of the Word, their use of the Sacraments, their prayer and adoration of the one Lord. Those who seek unity in Christ outside the church deny the unity given by Christ instead of confessing it.

It follows that "our oneness in Christ" cannot be achieved by human efforts but that it must be given to us by Christ. Or we might put it this way: Our unity in Christ must ultimately be Christ's oneness with us. It can be called "our unity" only because it is Christ's. But though Christ is indubitably one with us, are we really united with Him and with one another? We must ask ourselves whether we receive this unity in faith or whether we desire to bring it about ourselves by some method or other that must needs separate us from Christ. This question will exist until judgement-day. As long as the church is *in via* it can never afford to ignore it and to pretend that its unity in Christ is settled once and for all times. On the contrary, the church's unity in Christ is ever queried by "our disunity as churches". That is why faith, through which we experience "our oneness in Christ", is so "busy, mighty and active" a thing that can never be at rest. Until the last day faith will depend upon the oneness with Christ which He Himself gives us. Hence faith must always include the confession that Christ manifests His grace by His spiritual presence in the church. All human efforts at unity made apart from the oneness given to us by Christ are judged and condemned by God. This reveals God's ultimate judgement to us. It is against this background that we have to understand what contemporary theologians mean when they say of the unity of the church that we shall become what we already are, i. e. that we are called to receive by faith our oneness with Christ and joyfully to confess it.

This brings us to the question of what relation there is between our oneness in Christ and the unity of the church, or, to put it differently, whether "our oneness in Christ" and "our disunity as churches" can really co-exist. If the latter is the case, we must ask further how these two elements can be harmonized. If not, then we must ask why not.

Disunity within the Church

We can reply to the first of these two questions by putting forward the following thesis: There is a disunity that can exist within the church. Our oneness in Christ is not invalidated by a certain type of disunity. But this disunity must be more accurately defined.

The Church of Jesus Christ is part of history. She exists within time and change, within a variety of languages and peoples. Again and again, until the last day, she must face the ancient foe "who never rests" (Luther) and who therefore must be fought anew every day. The one eternal Gospel, which is the weapon against this foe, has to be expressed in different ways and thus constantly takes on new forms. The Gospel is not static, not the Word of God once revealed but, rather, the Word of God engaged in permanent struggle in our world and for that very reason addressing us in the situation in which we find ourselves at any given time and place. Nevertheless it always remains the same.

People rarely realize that the way in which the Bible uses the terms and expressions of the biblical languages should prove shocking to the more pedantic of our contemporaries. It should be made quite clear that the Synoptics, St. John, St. Paul, or St. James all use what are ultimately different languages in testifying to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We know from the history of exegesis that various exegetes have maintained that these differences do not only touch the vocabulary but also the subject-matter itself. Today we are agreed that the differences of language do not permit us to interpret the subject-matter differently. On the contrary, they show how the one eternal Gospel enters the various situations in which it is proclaimed. But have we taken this discovery seriously with regard to our own situation and that of our church? Should we not have concluded from it that we must seek our unity in Christ behind the variety of terminologies and concepts that are used? We have hardly yet begun to do so.

Let us take our Symbolical Books as an example. No one will seriously claim that the Symbolical Books use the same language as the New Testament. Though—thanks especially to Luther's own theology—they are very close to the language of the Bible, they are also influenced by that of the 16th century. At the same time they represent an interpretation of the Biblical message in the language of their own period. In some instances their language is even influenced by that of their opponents. And yet some parts of the Lutheran Church have canonized the language of the Symbolical Books almost as the Roman Church has canonized the language of scholasticism. But if we fear to use a language and terminology adapted to the needs of our time, this shows that

we have halted the Gospel in its progress and forced it into the strait-jacket of an immutable terminology. It also shows that we no longer know the Gospel to be God's weapon in the struggle against sin, but regard it as an instrument placed in our hands and available to us through certain definite words and phrases. If that is so, then the Gospel has lost its power. Statements that are tied down once and for all to a given terminology and that are therefore controlled by man can never be the Word of God engaged in His struggle against sin. They cannot be preached as liberating, new, glad tidings. All we can do is to repeat them as an immutable law. They can express God's judgement but not His redemptive love. To limit the Gospel to the language of a given period of church history is a purely human attempt at achieving unity and cannot be tolerated in the church. When, on the other hand, the language of the Gospel is formulated anew in obedience to God, this represents a diversity of various periods and schools of thought that can be tolerated very well. We should be slow to label as heretics those whose expressions and terms we do not understand. Rather should we seek "our oneness in Christ" within the diverse terminologies of the ages. That this diversity within the church has become "our disunity as churches" is an act of judgement on God's part. Nothing like that should ever have happened in the Church of Jesus Christ. But the fact that it has happened calls us to examine very seriously whether these divergences represent a genuine disunity in our preaching of the Christian message.

The same is true of the various traditions of the church, especially the liturgical traditions and those that shape Christian practices in daily life. Here, too, we are bound to say that a disunity of various parts of Christendom on this level should never have invalidated our oneness in Christ. The Scriptures do not provide rules for the form of the liturgy nor for church order, even though they help us in shaping them both. The first and foremost theme of the Scriptures themselves is the message of salvation. Within them we can see a diversity of Christian traditions or at least the beginnings of such a diversity. In itself, this fact should have been sufficient to present the church from taking over these traditions as the law. St. Paul was a Jew to the Jews and a Greek to the Greeks without thereby endangering his unity in Christ with the church as a whole. If the church had made better use of this principle, we might have been spared many divisions among the churches. But instead of preserving our Christian liberty, the theologians but too often proclaimed one tradition or another as the law. Finally the multiplicity of these laws resulted in the schisms and divisions that we now have. This tendency toward uniformity in exter-

nals is contrary to the true unity of the church, since it seeks unity not in Christ but in human traditions and patterns of behavior. Hence Christendom tends to preserve the very patterns that could and should logically be changed and adapted to new circumstances. We must not canonize the things of today; they will be judged by tomorrow, since both today and tomorrow are on the way to the end of days. Both change and impermanence are inevitable as long as the church is *in via*. But thereby our unity in Christ is not endangered but, rather, confirmed.

Those who are separatists on principle will hardly agree with this. From the fact that there are divergences within the church they will always conclude our disunity as churches and will therefore found their own churches. But this tendency does not have its roots in the Lutheran reformation. It can be supported neither from Luther's own attitude nor from the Lutheran Symbolical Books. Unfortunately, however, we have to admit that the tendency we have described has entered into the Lutheran Church from the outside. Therefore, when the Holy Spirit calls us to unity He also calls us to take a stand against what is ultimately a foreign element in our church. We cannot with a good conscience confess the unity of the church until we deny that we have the right to turn fraternal diversity into a multiplicity of churches. Those who are separatists on principle might today decide in favor of unity, but tomorrow they might follow again the call to separation. We must begin by confessing that the church is involved in history and that as Christians we stand within a life of fathers and brethren, stretching through the ages. Only thus can we realize the oneness of Christ with His Church behind the various forms of speech and theology, behind the various nations and the changing historical traditions. Only thus can we freely confess the freedom of the Christian and our freedom in shaping the life of the church within the course of history.

Disunity that Splits the Church

It will be clear from what has been said that it is possible to seek one type of unity in the Church of Jesus Christ that is ultimately nothing but the source of schism and that therefore must not be tolerated. For the tendency that we have described seeks to achieve something that is not "our oneness in Christ" but a kind of legal uniformity. This being so, we must now ask ourselves the further question whether, beside the diversity that can be tolerated in the church, there is not

another diversity or division that is not in agreement with the Gospel. Let us again answer this question in the form of a thesis: There is a diversity that is disruptive of the church's unity, and which consists in not being at one with the Gospel. This thesis is nothing but the application of the idea, developed above, where we set out from the principle that "our unity in Christ" must result in unity within the church. We would add that the unity in question is possible only "in Christ", i. e. where His Spirit is at work through the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments. From this it follows that there can be no unity "outside of Christ", i. e. apart from the faith by which we obediently receive God's salvation. From this thesis we can draw conclusions significant for the churches' ecumenical discussions.

There are two terms that express and explain the disunity of the churches. These terms are "schism" and "heresy". Both heresy and schism not only endanger but really break up the church's unity and create a genuine state of separation. In order to clarify the concepts here used, we want to term "schism" what we have described earlier in this essay, i. e. the attempt to overcome the kind of diversity which can and should be tolerated in the church. Thus schism appears as a disunity in the sphere of the law but is applied to that of the Gospel. Schism is therefore something less than real disunity in the church, whatever may be said to the contrary. Churches that are in schism may yet have communion in the Gospel. Heresy is something different. It consists in not being at one with the Gospel, and it is thus a phenomenon that distinguishes false doctrine from true. It can also appear within a church, possibly even without anyone in that church being conscious of it and therefore without the external unity of the church being disrupted. Without any apparent separation, heresy can create a false church within the true church. (In this context we might recall Luther's view of the medieval church). Heresy is therefore the contrary of schism in so far as it creates a genuine division within the church, which faith can perceive even though organizationally the church may still be one.

We have attempted to define the concept of heresy by saying that heresy consists in not being at one with the Gospel. In clarifying the preliminary questions we have here gone one step further than the report on the Faith and Order Conference in Lund. Regrettably enough, the definition of heresy given by that report is purely positivistic. It reads: "... heresy ... may be defined as an error of doctrine persistently proclaimed against an established norm of the church, affecting vital matters of teaching." (*The Third World Conference on Faith and Order*, Lund, 1952, page 30).

But this is not enough to define the concept of heresy, though it is enough to make it appear dangerously relative. On the one hand, the report does not say that there is no such thing as one true doctrine that the Church of Jesus Christ is bound to teach. On the other hand, it seems clear that those present in Lund were not of one mind on this subject. The same report (*loc. cit.*) continues: "It is agreed that there are 'necessaria' (necessary articles) in the Christian faith and we would restrict the word 'heresy' to this sphere, but we are not unanimous about their number and nature." What is later in the report given as "consensus in doctrine" presents an image of utter confusion and proves nothing but that a dissensus unfortunately exists. Perhaps the definition of heresy is formulated as it is, because those who were responsible for it did *a priori* doubt the possibility of doctrinal agreement and therefore sought a formal way out of this calamity. But even that is to be regretted. The need for defining the concept by its contents should have been met at least to the extent of saying "the Gospel", the "apostolic teaching (didaché)" or "the Holy Scriptures" instead of "an established norm of the church". Even that would have been vague enough, particularly in view of the present-day variety of interpretations. For that very reason a further step should have been taken towards the normative "center" of this doctrine, e. g. by mentioning the creeds of the ancient church, as it was done in Lausanne in 1927. This was not done in Lund. On the contrary, strong doubt was voiced as to whether the creeds could be used for the purpose of defining the center of Christian doctrine. We must ask here whether the ecumenical movement has not gone a step backward. Perhaps this step backward can be explained by the fact that, since the Lausanne meeting, so many new churches have joined the work and that this has slowed up the whole process. But even so, the danger should not be ignored. Otherwise our historically conditioned fraternal love, i. e. our desire to move at the same pace as all our brethren, might turn into a permanent state of indifference to all matters of doctrine.

As the Lutheran Church cooperates in the ecumenical movement, it will always point out to the other member churches that the "center" of the Gospel is the necessary presupposition of the church's unity. The Lutheran Church does this because of its conviction that the New Testament draws a clear dividing line between the Gospel of Jesus Christ and an "other Gospel", between the "teaching of the Apostles" and the "false teachers and prophets". Hence "our oneness in Christ" is at the same time unity in confessing the central Gospel message of the Lord, crucified and risen, present in His Church through the Holy Spirit in Word and Sacrament. But as long as the Lutheran Church

confesses Christ victorious in the struggle against the powers of darkness, it will never become a prey to the illusion that it possesses this center of the Gospel without ambiguity, i. e. without having to face the risk of false doctrine within its own ranks. Until the Day of Judgement the church will never imagine that it has definitely conquered the enemy, for this would be "Schwaermerei". It will preserve its hope in the church's unity and confess it amid the "disunity of the churches". Therein lies the eschatological character of the church's unity.

Luther was persuaded that the center of the Christian message was the teaching of justification by faith. He logically applied this idea also to the unity of the church (cf. e. g. his Commentary on Galatians of 1535). What he dared in his day, namely to expound Christ as the center of the Gospel to his contemporaries, no one has dared to do since his times. That is also where the Lund Conference of 1952 failed. Yet that is precisely what ought to be done in the ecumenical movement and that is what Lutherans would like to see in the future. Unfortunately, confessing Christ as "God and Saviour" does not mean so much today as it did e. g. in the ancient church, when the martyrs confessed Christ to be the "kyrios". In our day we shall have to help each other to understand this ancient confession of the church again and to interpret it aright. The unity of the church will become a real hope in this aeon if and when we achieve unity in this matter. With that confession—rightly understood—as a starting point we can dare to distinguish church and sect or church and anti-church.

The Struggle against Disunity within the Church

This brings us once more to a fundamental question concerning "our disunity as churches". In the ecumenical movement we shall have to beware of the illusion that we can escape this question. The church-struggles and the open persecution of the church in our times show that the judgement of God is upon us, foreshadowing the last judgement. Much of what makes or mars the true church has thus become apparent. What was built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ and what was built upon another foundation, has been tried by fire. And yet all this has been but a sign of the last day, in which the ultimate decision will be made. The decisions that the church makes in refuting and refusing false doctrine are signs of the ultimate decision of the Lord who is the only Judge. They do not represent a revelation of the ultimate separation that God Himself will make. That separation is hidden within the church's decisions. It is known only to faith. Therefore the church

is still in fear and hope on the way towards the end, and its unity is in the Lord who is present and active among us. Not to be at one with Him would be to expose the church to a disunity that must split it.

The question still to be answered, however, is what the church must do about this kind of disunity that it cannot tolerate. Again, those who are separatists on principle will know all the answers. They will solve the problem by separating from the church in which they have experienced this kind of disunity and by forming a community of their own. They are persuaded that they can thus better defend divine truth or secure it from distortion. They withdraw into their corner from where they criticize the false church, firmly convinced that they are voicing the judgement of God and that they are instruments of divine wrath. What happens in their community represents for them the true church, everything "outside" is the anti-church and is condemned by God.

The Church of Jesus Christ cannot share this attitude. She does not share the illusion that the false church can be overcome as easily as that and that she herself can live unspotted and secure from the attacks of Satan's church. That is why the Church of Jesus Christ unhesitatingly and without compromise proclaims the apostolic message, at the same time exerting patience in the care of the souls of those in error. The church proclaims the Law and the Gospel, both God's judgement and His gracious acceptance of the sinner, but it refrains from voicing the judgement of God otherwise than by leaving open a possibility of repentance until the last day.

That is the way the church deals not only with individual sinners (cf. 1. Cor. 5:5) but also with congregations that are endangered by the kind of disunity that splits the church, i. e. by apostasy from the Gospel. In the congregation of Corinth there were those who denied the resurrection (1. Cor. 15:12), others had celebrated the Lord's Supper "unworthily" and had thereby caused divisions (1. Cor. 11:17 ff.). In Galatia there was danger of "another Gospel" being preached (Gal. 1:6 f.). St. Paul certainly never hesitated in condemning these aberrations and in defending the Gospel. Galatians 2 shows how he did this, when judaizing Christians came from Jerusalem and wanted to introduce their ritualistic prescriptions in addition to the Christian faith. When even St. Peter hesitated and gave way to their influence, St. Paul opposed them openly before the entire congregation. He proclaimed the one and only Gospel as the one and only weapon against all that is wrong in the church. He attacked, but the war he waged, was waged within the congregation. St. Paul emerged victoriously from this ordeal of the primitive church. He neither left nor excommunicated the church or his fellow-Apostles. Instead, he firmly believed in the

Lord's victory and in this faith entered the fight for the one and only Gospel. The communion (koinonia) of the church was saved and the church itself passed successfully the first serious trial of its unity. Moreover, in spite of all attacks upon the Gospel and upon the unity of the church, the communion of the Lord's table was preserved both in Galatia and in Corinth. The greater the danger, the more urgently Christians were reminded of the one and only Gospel (1. Cor. 15:1 ff; Gal. 1:8). The war was waged from inside and ended in victory.

The reformers of the 16th century had the same attitude as St. Paul. There is no need to repeat here that Luther never wanted to found a new church. The question is only whether we are sufficiently conscious of what this statement implies. Its meaning can be seen from what is said in Luther's *Formula Missae* of 1523. It is known that Luther strongly condemned the canon of the Roman mass. To him the canon seemed to prove that the center of the Gospel of Christ was being despised and trodden under foot daily in the Roman Church all over the world. But even though he thought of the church as apostate and condemned it, he did not leave it, though his life was in danger on account of the papal excommunication. He remained in the church and declared: "Thus do we plague Satan by means of the Word, though he pretend to laugh. But Christ will make his hopes come to naught and will make him fall before the eyes of all." (W. A. 12, 220; 17 ff.).

Elsewhere, Luther speaks of the difference that exists between the rule of faith (canon fidei) and the rule of love (canon caritatis). Faith, he says, cannot be changed, since it must stand unbending; but in love we may bend and adapt ourselves to our neighbor's needs. Immutable faith can be reconciled with love and the patient cure of souls. Nor should it ever be otherwise in the Church of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, little use has been made hitherto of these principles of Luther's with regard to the church's unity or—more concretely—in ecumenical discussions.

As to the Augsburg Confession of 1530, there can be no doubt that it was designed not as an explanation of the faith of a group about to withdraw from the Roman Church but as a confession of the Church of Jesus Christ and in particular of the western form of the church. Those responsible for drawing up the Augsburg Confession did not hesitate to proclaim their unity with western Christendom in 21 fundamental articles that are of decisive importance for the Christian faith. Consciously controversial questions are raised only in those articles that plead for the abolition of a few abuses. What perspectives might not open up for our ecumenical discussions if we could learn this attitude again in the whole of world Lutheranism!

We have earlier raised the fundamental question as to what constitutes disunity that cannot be tolerated in the church, i. e. what kind of disunity must lead to division into churches. As we have seen, this same problem was raised both in the early church and at the time of the Reformation. In both cases this happened within the one church. But what was possible at the Apostolic Council of Jerusalem or between St. Peter and St. Paul at Antioch had become impossible at the time of the Reformation, precisely because the church of the period was no longer able to take that fundamental question seriously. Instead, it tried to preserve itself and its unity by human means and in its pride expelled those who raised the question. This was something monstrous, and we must seriously ask whether, at the time, Rome was not guilty of the very kind of separatism that later generations seem to have imitated without much hesitation. The breadth of the Roman Church which we so often hear commended does not at that decisive moment seem to have been sufficient to tolerate even the Gospel itself.

The Ecumenical Mission of World Lutheranism

Today the discussion within the ecumenical movement is carried on by confessional churches. If in what has been said above we have defined separatism as something that has no right to exist in the Lutheran Church, we must here add an equally serious warning against every kind of enthusiastic unionism. In order to explain this warning we need but point to what we have said about the disunity that splits the church. It may be true that the various confessional churches cannot be distinguished from one another as church and anti-church. But it does not follow that we must blindly obey some vague "call to unity". We must say quite openly that we have serious misgivings concerning some churches' understanding of the all-determining center of the message of Christ. But church unity makes sense only when and where that center is understood aright and alike.

Thus we return to our starting point. In order to declare ourselves one in Christ we must know the gracious presence of the Lord in the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments. It is easy to prove from the Augsburg Confession that the Lutheran Church knows no other condition of church fellowship. But we often forget that this Lutheran view of unity leaves the doors wide open for a reunion of the churches. In our own church, these Lutheran principles concerning church unity should be more strongly felt. They should make us feel less secure and should keep us watchful. We should put

more zeal into seeking where, in other churches, the Word of God is proclaimed so that men know that Jesus Christ is at its center and where the Sacraments are administered according to Christ's institution for the renewal of faith. We should also without hesitation confess the communion of the Spirit whenever we meet such an experience. Unfortunately, many Lutheran churches do not make use of this obligation and limit their life and activity to their own "Lutheran" circle, defined as such by their church constitution.

But our Lutheran Confessions and the Holy Scriptures allow us to seek the one Church of Jesus Christ in, with, and under all the diverse confessional churches. If we make use of this possibility, "our oneness in Christ" will overcome "our disunity as churches", and the road towards unity and communion in the one and only saving Gospel of the Lord will be clear. To do so in obedience and faith is what the Holy Spirit demands of us.

That is why we do not speak about the Church as if it were a Platonic Idea, but we show the Church, according to the saying: "Tell it to the Church" (Matth. 18: 17). Here we must necessarily understand the visible Church . . . What are the signs which are peculiar to the Church? Signs which do not deceive are these three together: 1. Agreement in the pure teaching of the Gospels as a basis. 2. The proper use of the Sacraments. 3. Obedience which is owed to service to the divine Word (ministerium) according to the Gospel . . . It is absolutely necessary that those individuals who want to enter blessedness be tied to the true Church by faith, confession, invocation of God, and the will to maintain the Church, or the communion in the Church.

PHILIPP MELANCHTHON Examen Ordinandorum 1559

TAITO A. KANTONEN

Christ—the Hope of Those Who are Outside the Church

Because the Christian hope is not based upon human wishes but upon the sovereign purpose of God, it is in a specific sense the hope of those who have committed themselves to this purpose in faith. It is to the people of Christ that the apostle speaks in saying “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27) and “Christ Jesus our hope” (1 Tim. 1:1). But since the divine purpose includes all mankind, the Christian hope pertains also to those who are outside the Church. This aspect of truth is an integral part of the theme of the Evanston Assembly, “Christ—the Hope of the World”.

The starting point for a discussion of our hope from this point of view is the cosmic reality of Christ. It has been characteristic of evangelical Christianity ever since the Reformation, to concentrate attention upon the necessity for each man to accept Christ as his personal Savior. This is a vitally important emphasis, for God does not save men *en masse*. The Gospel addresses itself to the conscience of each individual. But the Gospel recognizes also the inseparable interrelation between creation and redemption. The Christ who lives in our hearts through faith is also the Lord of creation, of whom the apostle writes, “All things were created through him and for him” (Col. 1:16). All areas of life obtain their meaning and purpose only in relation to Him. And when the Word by which all things were made became flesh, He identified Himself with all humanity and carried out God’s redeeming purpose for all creation. “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son” (John 3:16), “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself” (2 Cor. 5:19). By His crucifixion and resurrection Christ has assumed lordship not only over the Church but over the whole world. God “has put all things under his feet” (Eph. 1:22). The world-task of the Church, “Go and make disciples of all nations”, is a logical “therefore” drawn from the fact that He who issues it has “all authority in heaven and on earth”. In carrying out this mission, the Church must bear clear witness that all men already stand under the rule of Christ, whether they acknowledge His lordship or not. This is part of that “manifold wisdom of

God" which is made known through the Church to "the principalities and powers" (Eph. 3:10). As the Body of Christ and the instrument through which He accomplishes His purpose for the world, the Church cannot limit its interest to its own membership. Nothing human is any more alien to the Church than it is to Christ. He is the true Lord of those who confess Him and of those who do not. The Word assures us that the day will come when every knee will bow and every tongue will acclaim the basic affirmation of our faith, "Jesus is Lord". Until that time the Church must be sensitive to the groanings, conscious or unconscious, with which not only all humanity but all creation waits for the revealing of the sons of God.

In Christ and Outside Christ

In presenting Christ as the hope of the entire world, of non-believers as well as of believers, it is vitally important to bear in mind, however, that the world can share in the essential content of the Christian hope only as it ceases to be a world alienated from God. The fundamental distinction between being "in Christ" and being "outside Christ" must never be forgotten. Those who are in Christ do not hope in Christ "in this life only" (1 Cor. 15:19). Theirs is "a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf" (Hebr. 6:19—20). They have been "delivered out of the present evil age" (Gal. 1:4) and "transferred into the kingdom of his beloved Son" (Col. 1:13). They already live in the new age and taste of the powers of the world to come. As a first installment and guarantee (*ἀρραβών*) of the coming Kingdom they have the gift of the Holy Spirit. Their attitude is one of eager expectation of the full manifestation of the triumph of their Lord. They have "turned from idols to serve a living and true God and to wait for his Son from heaven" (1 Thess. 1:9 f).

Christ is not in this sense the hope of those who are not in Him. They are still "in their sins", subject to the demonic powers of the present age. "Separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise", they are without hope (Eph. 2:12). In laying away their dead, they "grieve as those who have no hope" (1 Thess. 4:13). There is hope for them only because Christ has come into the world and offers eternal life to all who accept Him in faith. The Church carries out its mission as bearer of true hope for the world when it refuses to identify its message with men's own ideas of success and progress, declares

uncompromisingly that he who does not have the Son does not have life, and exerts every effort to lead men out of the darkness of existence without Christ into the marvelous light of His Kingdom. Apart from Christ men do not share in the hope contained within the Kingdom itself but only in the outward effects of the reality of the Kingdom as a transforming power in the present age.

To say that the Church must present Christ and Christ alone as the hope of those who are outside the Church may appear to be obvious and even trite. Yet if the evangelistic and missionary work of the Church is to be true to its mission, it must be constantly related to vital Christology, to the incarnate, crucified, risen, and returning Christ.

The Word Incarnate and the Preaching of the Church

The Word with which the Church confronts the world is, first of all, the Word incarnate. The heart of the Christian message is not "God formulated a policy" or "God gave a set of ideas and regulations" but "God sent forth His Son". The hope of mankind is rooted in the paradox of paradoxes, the miracle of miracles, the incarnation. The life that stirred beneath Mary's heart was Life of Life, God of God, very God of very God. The eternal has become temporal, the divine has become human, God Himself has taken on our flesh and blood. God has been born into the world in a definite time and place, walked a man among men, died a criminal's death on a Roman cross planted on a Judean hill. By this amazing divine action the chasm between God and man has been bridged. God has identified Himself with man in order that man might have fellowship with God.

Both the content and the method of the Church's mission have their source in the fact of the incarnation. This fact gives the Christian kerygma at the same time a living personal concreteness which distinguishes it from every form of speculation, and a direct appeal to every human heart. The Word which we proclaim is not our thoughts about God, not even primarily God's thoughts handed down to us in transcript, but the Word who became flesh. The God who became man is not concerned with truths or principles but with persons. He is not interested in men's opinions or actions as such. Back of the opinions and actions are the men themselves who think and act as they do because they are what they are. His appeal therefore does not take the form "Believe my teachings", "Follow my precepts", but „Believe in me", "Follow me", "I am the truth". He

asks men to take hold of Him as a hungry man takes hold of bread. The application of the incarnation to the content of evangelism has never been expressed in stronger words than these: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you" (John 6:53).

The apostles had the same message. They had been sent not to win assent to this or that proposition but to be fishers of men, to take them captive to Christ, to confront them with the incarnate Word so that they would give themselves as a living sacrifice to Him. They addressed themselves to the crucial question: has God or has God not made a unique and decisive entrance into human history? In personal terms, can man or can he not come face to face with God here and now? Their answer was: "God was in Christ" (2 Cor. 5:19) and "In him dwells the whole fullness of deity bodily" (Col. 2:9). "What we preach", says Paul, "is Jesus Christ", and to prevent us from losing the force of that statement and twisting it to mean that we only talk about Christ, the apostle goes on to say that we carry in these very bodies of ours the crucified and risen Lord, "that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor. 4:5—11).

The incarnation of the Word is here presented both as the substance of the message and the method for presenting it. The Word that became flesh for us becomes flesh in us as He uses us to establish contact with other men. When we get up to preach, Christ Himself walks in our steps, He looks through our eyes, He thinks in our thoughts, He speaks through our words, He loves through our hearts. Through us the Kingdom of God actually touches the lives of men, and God becomes real to them. So tremendous is the impact that it has the force of a new creation, as in the beginning when God created heaven and earth and made an ordered cosmos out of chaos. "For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6). The Word which we preach is as creative as the Word by which the heavens were made. It has power to re-create the disordered lives of men and to present them to God as new creatures in Christ.

The Word Incarnate and the Witness of Laymen

This apostolic teaching applies not only to the preaching of the Gospel from the pulpit but also to the witness of Christian laymen. The whole Christian fellowship, clergy and laity, constitutes the

"royal priesthood, holy nation, God's own people". Every member of the Messianic community is called to the Messianic mission, "that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9). The apostles who first received the command "Go into all the world and make disciples of all nations" would have made little progress if this huge enterprise had depended on what only twelve men could do. Christianity spread because it was essentially a lay movement in which every member was a missionary.

In such a world as ours, in which large sections of the population even in so-called Christian countries have become alienated from Christ and in which militant anti-Christian forces are rampant, the Church cannot fulfil its mission unless laymen consecrate themselves to the tasks of the universal priesthood. The introductory leaflet on Evangelism prepared by the Study Department of the World Council of Churches for the Evanston Assembly contains this arresting statement: "The major problem confronting the Church today is not the content of the Gospel, nor the machinery of evangelism, but the point of contact between the message we know to be both true and relevant and the people to whom for the most part it is only partly true and almost wholly irrelevant". Of particular importance in the establishing of such points of contact is the witness of laymen, for they, still more than the clergy, are Christ's representatives in everyday life, in the frontier region where the Church and the world meet. They must become the means by which men in every stratum of society, from the ranks of labor to the intelligentsia of the universities, are confronted with the living Christ. To this end it is necessary to recapture in its full vitality God's own method of winning back His lost creation, the incarnation of the Word. God becomes real to men when He assumes the human touch and is lived out in human relations. Just so Christian men and women are the original means of grace, the agencies by which God works. "The good seed means the sons of the kingdom" (Matth. 13:38). As one American pastor has expressed it, a Christian is God's Word in shoe-leather, not only walking to church but also walking from church to reach those who do not come there.

Christ, the incarnate Word, as the hope of all men, and the strategy implied in the incarnation, determine the missionary work of the Church as well as the work of evangelism in "Christian" lands. Two decades ago a committee of lay scholars headed by Professor W. E. Hocking of Harvard made a survey of the entire missionary enterprise and published their findings in a work entitled

"Rethinking Missions", in which they recommended a complete change of outlook and procedure. The central recommendation was that Christianity should give up its claim to the possession of absolute truth and its demand that a non-Christian must make a clean break with his former religion. Instead of stressing the uniqueness of its own content Christianity should build upon and incorporate the spiritual values of the non-Christian religions. The permanent function of missions is the promotion of world unity through the spread of understanding of the vital elements of all religion. Granting that God has not left Himself without a witness among any people and that non-Christian religions represent sincere efforts on the part of man to find God, this conception of the Church's mission is nevertheless the exact opposite of the original Christian kerygma: "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Were the Church to substitute a syncretism of human spirituality for God's revelation of Himself in Christ, it would no longer be the Church. It is therefore encouraging to observe that in the ecumenical movement today Christians are both finding one another and planning their strategy for the world on the basis of the centrality of Christ.

Christ Duplicated in the Life of his Followers

But the danger still remains, both at home and abroad, of substituting impersonal ideas and forms for the incarnate Word. The Christianity of large numbers of church members in Christian lands consists in little more than the acceptance of inherited traditional ways of thinking and acting as embodied in a cultural heritage. And too much of missionary activity has been merely the effort to transplant this heritage into new soil. An American missionary to India recently wrote a thought-provoking article entitled "Can Missions be Christian?" (*Christian Century*, Feb. 17, 1954). The missionary's greatest sin, he said, is bringing to India and other nations a church that is not the Church. It is a bourgeois church, a mission-compound church, not the church of the needy, the people of the slums and the villages. In a new nation striving for a casteless society it represents a caste of its own, having little vital relationship to the needy masses. Missionaries who in the midst of dire poverty live in comparatively luxurious bungalows with plenty of servants and ride about in costly Western automobiles can bear only very feeble witness. The missionary, insists the writer, must be a daring pilgrim on the path of truth, not

a coward sitting in the rocking chair of Western civilization. And the Church must be willing to give up her cherished institutions, if they stand in the way of genuine knowledge of Christ. Here is an illustration of the basic principle which underlies the whole evangelistic and missionary work of the Church: in presenting Christ as the hope of those who are distant from Him, the Word who became flesh, the Christ who became poor in order that we might become rich must be duplicated in the lives of His followers.

In confronting men with God "manifested in the flesh" the herald of the Gospel goes on to say with Paul, "I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2). Christ is the hope of the world because He is God in saving action to overcome man's sin and put an end to the alienation from God which sin has brought about. This is what makes the Gospel "good news" which must be delivered to every human being. The incarnation, the redemption, and the evangelistic commission are all summed up in an apostolic word which must be considered as the key text of the entire Christian message: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:19).

The Gospel of the Cross addresses itself to the deepest need of every human being, his need of the restoration of a personal fellowship with God through the grace of forgiveness. The message of reconciliation remains a strange and irrelevant doctrine so long as men, relying on their own wisdom, strength, and goodness, are confident that they know how to work out their own problems, when they believe that by organizing intelligently the outward conditions of life they can insure their security. Those who are well have no need of a physician. All the values that a man has lived by, however, turn hollow when he has been compelled in the solitude of his conscience to face his own innermost self and has discovered there an incurable anxiety, an aching emptiness where God ought to be. When men see their troubles only on the surface, they resort to superficial cures: more efficient education, more clever politics and economics, more potent moral advice. When the true source of the tragedy of the human predicament has been traced to sin, then men's only hope is seen to be in the reconciliation effected on the Cross.

This raises the vexing question: how can we waken in the complacent and self-satisfied people we have to work with a sense of their spiritual need, a consciousness of sin that will lead to an acceptance of the grace of forgiveness? The answer again lies ultimately in Christ. Like the poor paralytic of the Gospel story, men and

women of today can do nothing, not even repent, until loving hands have carried them to Christ and they have heard His voice. Paul was a proud Pharisee, glorying in his opposition to Christ, until he found himself face to face with the pardoning Savior. He never recovered from his amazement at the mysterious love that encompassed him in the midst of his sin. He had no defense against the Christ who loved him and died for him while he was still an enemy. The Cross does not merely speak a word of forgiveness to those who by some other means have become qualified to receive it. It is the strongest word of judgment as it is of redemption. It both convicts and pardons. The result will not be achieved in every case. A man may look into the face of the thorn-crowned Christ and then spit in it. His sinful self-will may frustrate God's redeeming will, so that grace, as far as he is concerned, is in vain. Nygren is right in saying, "That which cannot be won by the reckless self-giving of love cannot be won at all; there remains only judgement". We may well ask, however, whether we are ever in a position to apply that word to any individual. Our proper question is: how fully have we explored and how resourcefully have we applied the soul-winning resources of the crucified Christ?

Here again we meet the principle of duplication. The Cross furnishes the evangelistic and missionary work of the Church not only its central content but also Christ's own way of dealing with those who are estranged from him. The apostle Peter states it in this way: "For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps" (1 Peter 2:21). The same truth is present in Paul's references to being "crucified with Christ" and "carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested" (2 Cor. 4:10). The crucifixion, like the incarnation, must be duplicated in the messengers of Christ. Jesus is our Savior because He is our sin-bearer, and it is by bearing the sins of our fellow-men, so to speak, that we are asked to win them to God. Weighted with the burden of our sins, His agonized soul bore all, suffered all, unto death, even the death of the Cross. He loved us too greatly to abandon us to the power of sin. He gave His all to redeem us. In the presence of such love men are constrained to make their choice, either to turn their backs to Him or to surrender to His love and allow it to remake them into new men. This must also be the approach of one who bears in his body the death of Jesus, as he confronts those for whom Christ died. In a word, it is to surround a man with so much sincere and constant love that he must do himself violence not to surrender. The Gospel presents reconciliation not as a spectacle to be viewed but as a

strategy to be carried out. It does not allow us to rest comfortably at the foot of the Cross but commissions us to a ministry of reconciliation. It is a ministry which embraces friends and enemies alike. It is a ministry of resourceful, persistent, and sacrificing love which bears the pattern of the Cross.

When we go on to inquire into the source from which this ministry of reconciling love derives its power, we are led beyond the manger and the cross to the empty tomb and the risen Christ. The hope which the Church offers to men is not drawn from the life and teachings of a man who lived two thousand years ago but from the Lord who is a living reality. The resurrection is the event to which the Church owes its existence, the truth which validates and vitalizes everything else we teach. It vindicates the teachings of Jesus and proves His divinity. He was "designated Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:4). It assures the believer of the forgiveness of sins and the restoration of a right relation to God: He was "raised for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). It is the ground for our hope of eternal life: "Because I live, you will live also" (John 14:19). The same almighty power which is manifest in Christ's resurrection makes the Gospel we preach "the power of God unto salvation" and makes possible the new birth of the Christian. Thus the apostle speaks of "the immeasurable greatness of his power in us who believe, according to the working of his great might which he accomplished in Christ when he raised him from the dead" (Eph. 1:19-20).

In the original Christian witness Christ's triumph over death is not only a pivotal event to be remembered, a basic doctrine to be understood, the ground of a hope to be cherished. It is a glorious reality to be experienced here and now. Here the idea of duplication rises to its sublimest height. "You have been raised with Christ" (Col. 3:1); "as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4); "If any one is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17). The new life in Christ is not a development of man's former religiosity. It is a dying and rising again, as absolute as creation, as profoundly mysterious as the resurrection of Christ. The duplication of the Easter miracle in the life of the believer stands for the fact that for those who are "in Christ" the new aeon, the Messianic age, has already begun. Through His resurrection Christ has brought into the present world the life of the world to come. Faith is access to this life. "In Christ" our old calculations of what is possible and what is impossible become obsolete. We "taste of the powers of the world to come" and become

channels by which God releases these powers into the world. We can do all things through Him who strengthens us. The victorious Lord works through us to fulfil God's redeeming purpose for the world. Were it not so, we would have no message and no mission. We would still be in our sins, enslaved by the demonic powers of the present evil age under which all creation groans, destined only to perish, of all men most pitiable because we have put our trust in a delusion. But because Christ is a living reality, faith in God, the forgiveness of sins, power for a new life, and triumph over death are also living realities. Such is the living hope to which men are born anew through the Gospel of the resurrection.

The Christian Hope Inseparably Connected with the Returning Christ

When we bear in mind that the Christian hope centers in the living Christ and in the new life which He offers, we are prevented from substituting our own lesser goals for the true purpose of our mission. We are not sent to propagate an ideology or to introduce or perpetuate a cultural inheritance. To become a Christian is as vital and individual a matter as to be born. One who has been born into a Christian home and a Christian community, as well as a total outsider, confronts the demand: "You must be born again". It is a matter of life, not merely of belief or tradition or code or institution. To become a Christian is more than to understand and accept what the Church teaches, to join and to work for the Church, or to conform to Christian standards of conduct. It is to die to self and to be made alive in Christ, to be born into the new humanity which has the risen Christ as its head. According to the study pamphlet on evangelism prepared for Evanston, there are people in Christian churches to whom John 3:16 means no more than this: "God so loved the world that he once inspired a certain Jew to inform his contemporaries that there is a great deal to be said for loving one's neighbor". We may not be guilty of contributing to so gross a perversion of the Gospel, but we are in constant danger of being satisfied with something less than leading men to a personal commitment to the living Christ. Lay evangelism, in particular, suffers from the fact that the people whom we exhort to witness for Christ are learners and followers of the teachings of Christ but not sharers of the fellowship of His sufferings and the power of His resurrection. They are not evangelists, for they cannot communicate to others what they themselves do not have.

What is needed to remedy this situation is, first of all, thorough spiritual honesty. Both ministers and laymen need to be told: "Do not pretend to have faith when you do not. Do not pretend to be born again when you are not. As Sadhu Sundar Singh would say, do not cover up your spiritual nakedness with the fig-leaves of theology." We do well to remember that even the original disciples, after all their training in the school of their Master, needed a new transforming contact with the risen Christ and a baptism by His Spirit before they could say, "By his great mercy we have been born anew". But to us, as to them, He makes good His promise: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be my witnesses". Pentecost is more than a memory. The Spirit who unites the Church with her living Lord is still available. The risen Christ still imparts the reality of His presence where His people are attentive to the Word, expectant in prayer, and obedient in service. In the evangelistic work of the Church we experience again and again the truth of the word „Without me you can do nothing" but also of the word "He is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them" (Hebr. 7:25).

The mission of the Church is inseparably connected, finally, with the returning Christ. The redeeming purpose of God, manifest in the incarnation, the crucifixion, and the resurrection, finds its fulfilment in the parousia. In speaking about the second coming of our Lord we do not speculate about something we do not know but affirm what we do know, the victory which Christ has already won and the inevitability of the ultimate consummation of that victory. This is the truth which Karl Heim has portrayed so unforgettably in *Jesus der Weltvollender*. Viewed from eternity, world-reconciliation and world-fulfilment are two aspects of the same divine act. When the rebellion against God has been crushed, God's creative power flows once more into the world without restraint and the new creation has begun. The atonement and the new creation belong as inseparably together as lightning and the thunder which follows it. Lightning and thunder are the effects of one and the same eruption of electricity. There is an interval between them only because sound waves travel more slowly than light waves. But once the lightning has flashed, the sound of thunder must come. We are living in such an interval. Christ has already triumphed. His kingdom is already established. With the eyes of faith we see this and confess "Jesus is Lord", but in the end this Christian creed will be the universal acclamation. Eventually but inevitably the thunder of judgement will

sound, and every knee will bow and every tongue confess the lordship of Christ.

It is our Lord Himself who has specifically connected the task of world evangelism with the parousia. "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come" (Matth. 24:14). When we ask for a clue for judging whether world-history is approaching its fulfilment, the Lord directs our attention, not to world-politics but to world-missions. The missionary task which He gave to His Church has nothing less than cosmic significance. It is an integral part of God's eternal purpose, and when it has achieved its goal, the world is ripe for judgement. From the human point of view, this task is endless. Nations come and go, and each new generation is a new field for evangelism. Entire nations which once were "Christian" may become paganized. It is to be noted, however, that the coming of the end is not made dependent upon the conversion of all nations but upon the proclamation of the Gospel as testimony to all nations. The Church will not have carried out her mission until the knowledge of the Gospel has reached truly world-wide proportions. It is not for us to judge when mankind as a whole, or even any individual person, has obtained sufficient knowledge of the Gospel to be accountable or to speculate on the fate of the countless people who have died without that knowledge. It is for us to realize the seriousness of our responsibility to spread the Gospel, remembering that as we dedicate ourselves to this responsibility the Word even permits us to speak about "hastening the coming of the day of God" (2 Peter 3:12).

A sober expectation of the parousia is an expression of the vitality of the Church's love and faith and a strong incentive to consecrated service. The Church is the bride of Christ, and the bride's love for her groom expresses itself in longing and waiting for him. A Church that has ceased to long for the coming of Christ is a Church that has become faithless. On the other hand, when the eyes of faith are focused on the assured triumph of the coming Lord, there is strength to carry on even when the situation appears hopeless. We know that the future belongs to Christ and that no accidental quip of events will prevent the course of history from moving toward His complete victory. Eschatological Christianity is revolutionary Christianity, for it is geared not to what happens to be at any given time, but to what must be because the kingdoms of the world belong to God and His Christ. It therefore insists, as in the case of the first Christian, on turning the world upside down. The relation between the present age and the age to come is not that between a purely spiritual

other-worldly order which is only a matter of expectation and an unchangeable present order which follows its own inherent laws. It is a relation of conflict between a demonized old order and a redemptive new order already at work within it, between "a strong man fully armed" defending his palace and "a stronger than he" who has entered the palace to overcome him and to take away his goods. Faith is tension and struggle, for it is participation in this conflict of powers; but hope undergirds faith with the assurance of victory.

Our Obligation to Present the Whole of Christ

We have observed that Christ Himself supplies both the substance and the form to the Church's mission to those outside her life. In Him, the Word incarnate, God enters into concrete personal relations with men, and through His Body, the Church, He continues to carry out His purpose to seek and to save the lost. As the crucified Mediator He effects a reconciliation between God and His wayward children. He entrusts to His Church the ministry of reconciliation employing His own strategy of redeeming love. As the risen Lord He triumphs over sin and death and raises His Church with Him to release into the lives of men the power of His resurrection. As the exalted Ruler of heaven and earth He gives His Church her world-mission and undergirds her with His living presence and the promise of His return in glory.

Only this radical Christ-centeredness can make the Church the bearer of genuine hope for the world. It enables us, first of all, to see and to meet men's deepest need. The relevance of the hope offered in Christ depends on the answer to the question: "What can man give as a ransom for his soul?" If a man can give something, it is unnecessary for God to forgive. If a man is spiritually solvent, he does not need a Redeemer. The Gospel of saving grace is an absolute necessity or it is nothing. Only the evangelical insight that man, even in his highest moral and spiritual interests, is a sinner in need of being saved gives the Church's mission the note of true urgency. A newspaperman, impressed by a Gospel sermon, asked the preacher: "If the churches actually believe what you preach, why are they not desperate about it?" There is an overtone of that desperateness in Paul's cry, "Woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel". A complacent attitude is utterly incompatible with the nature of the Gospel. To settle down to a dispassionate routine is to betray our calling. To use Kierkegaard's phrase, Christianity is the life of the eleventh hour. To

be a messenger of the Gospel is to be commissioned to deliver pardon to doomed men. Our concern is that the message is delivered and that it is the message that is delivered. We are ambassadors for Christ. An ambassador does not make the policy. He carries out the policy of his government. Since it is God's policy to save men through the Gospel, we have neither the right to substitute something else for the Gospel nor the need to fortify it with extraneous support. We are not called, for example, to prove that the Gospel is true. It validates itself as it meets the helplessness, guilt, and despair of men. We bear witness to the Gospel and leave it to the Holy Spirit to produce the results. A man who is cold needs to be led to a fire, not a lecture on the properties of fire or an exhortation to get warm. So, with Luther, we should *Christum treiben*, trusting that when a man has looked Christ in the heart, God gives him faith.

The Christ-centered message of hope, in the second place, gives the Church's mission inexhaustible motive power. "Being engaged in this service by the mercy of God we do not lose heart" (2 Cor. 4:1). The enthusiasm drawn from men's own emotional resources is soon used up. Weariness and exhaustion set in. The only alternative left is the legalistic "you must". The obstreperous will is flogged with exhortations: "you must do better"; "you must try harder". To admonish people to try harder to do better is no Gospel at all. To exhort man who is by nature self-centered to love God with his whole heart is truly to gather grapes from thorns and figs from thistles. It is as cruel as it is futile. It is like telling a soldier whose legs have been shot off to get up and march. With the Gospel the case is entirely different. It is an "engrafted" word containing the gift of new life. It both changes the human heart from within and carries the power for its own propagation. It is marked by a joyful spontaneity as contrasted with legalistic strain and coercion. In Luther's fine phrase, it enables us to serve God "*libera et hilari voluntate*". Another trait is its outgoing and overflowing quality. We may call it *charis* or *agape*, but in either case we are speaking about God's own nature, about a creative and energizing power which flows from the heart of God. Love is not self-contained or close-lipped. It is impelled from within to communicate itself, to share its life, to create fellowship. That is why the faith born of grace is, as Luther saw, a restless thing that cannot but do good. Still another trait of the motive power of the Gospel is that it is no respecter of persons. It draws no distinction between the worthy and the unworthy, the deserving and the undeserving. As our Lord teaches in the Sermon on the Mount, it is patterned on God's heart

and therefore shows the same disregard for fences as do sunshine and rain. Finally, it does not become discouraged in the face of any apparent failure. It can afford to pour itself out with utter recklessness, for it draws on infinite resources. It may be of the very nature of love, as Luther thought, to be rejected and despised and crucified, but nothing can prevent it from having the last word.

Finally, since the Church's mission of hope centers in Christ Himself and is based on the commission which He has given to the entire Christian fellowship, it has unlimited human potential to draw upon as its instrumentalities. This hope does not flow into the life of the world only through certain narrow ecclesiastical channels. The confrontation of men with Jesus Christ, so that they may be led to accept Him as their Lord and to follow Him in the fellowship of the Church and in their everyday life, is not a specialized activity, one among others in the Church. It is the heart of all her activities, the whole life of the Church surging forth into the world to accomplish the task for which the Church exists. This work cannot be left to the chosen few. Every Christian, acting as a Christian, is an evangelist and missionary. No Christian can transfer to another his privilege and duty to witness for Christ. Only as the whole Church, clergy and laity, becomes consecrated to her Christ-given mission, can she establish contact with the whole range of human life and present Christ as the hope of the whole world.

We ought not so much to apply ourselves to appear learned as, rather, more and more to entice others also to Christianity. The most forceful manner of overcoming the Turks is this: that they should see shining through us the way in which Christ taught and lives, that they might see that we are not concerned about their empire, gold, and goods, but that we seek nothing other than their salvation and Christ's honor. This is the right and genuine forceful theology which, in times gone by, subjected to Christ both the grandiloquent reason of the worldly-wise and the princes' invincible scepters. If we act thus, Christ will aid us; for we must not prove our Christianity by killing so many, but by bringing all to salvation. Not by sacrificing many thousand unbelievers to the devil, but by making devout so many of the godless. But should we lack such intent, we shall much more likely turn into Turks than the Turks become Christians.

Praefatio ad Paulum Volsium. 17th Century

ERICH THIER

Christ's Community and Her Social Responsibility

The narrow limits of this venture are prescribed by the fact that it is a sort of framework. Within it, our concrete problems are found, but they as such will not be developed. And although we shall always keep in mind the area of tension between Romans 13 and Revelation 13 we shall hardly talk about the political sphere: Our real concern will strain for a new understanding of Christian ethics. It is to be hoped that the next sentence will not prove to contradict this.—

In the aeon which we call "world history" there is no sociological place of grace. "But the scripture consigned all things to sin." And this happened in order "that what was promised to faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe." (Gal. 3:22) In this much the reverse is true: that each sociological place in which the Congregation of Christ exists, or is brought to life, is a Place of Promise. This promise, again, calls the Congregation to service for the world and to the world; the missionary task cannot be suspended. We need not here discuss the fact that it has led to extremely diversified types of encounter between Church and world. We must, however, call to mind the one kind which resulted in the concept of a "christianized" society in medieval universalism, but also in the Protestant National Churches after the Reformation. It was tied up intimately with the feudal system and, together with this, proved rather stable, despite manifold internal shifts and tensions. It might be worth separate consideration how Martin Luther's small Catechism, for a long stretch of the road, may have been regarded as a mirror in which everyone could recognize his place; and how it was, at the same time, an appeal to live according to one's call to an appointed niche. Since this must be understood as not static but dynamic, one can say that it enclosed life in all its abundance. But such a possibility can truly exist only as a great gift of grace.—

We know, of course, that tensions were concealed within the "christianized society". We need only to remember the peculiarities of orthodoxy, pietism, and rationalism to be aware of this. And

Shakespeare's caustic word about the stench that rises from the mud in the village pond when it is stirred was directed at that society. In those days as well, the Christian Community was sick. But sick she has been since the days of the discord among the apostles and the "murmuring" of the Hellenists against the Hebrews (Acts 6). As a historical structure she shares the infirmities of all sociological formations shaped of mankind. Since, however, she has her home "in heaven", from whence also "we await a Saviour" (Phil. 3:20), she is also an ever recovering Congregation. What contributed to the recovery in those days was the fact that everyone in the, as it were, organic course of life, was led to the place where he was told the Word of justification by faith and was offered reconciliation with God.

Emigration from the Congregation

Truly, this offer was not accepted by all. This became inescapably evident with the crisis of the feudal system which produced industrial class-society. Otherwise the emigrations from the Congregation of Christ which then began would not have been possible. Such groups of emigrants were formed by the "culturally refined", by the "scientists", by the "engineers"; it must be added that the proletarians organized outside not only bourgeois society but all Christian boundaries. Each of those defections brings to mind the guilty fact that certain and vital needs and concerns had simply not been "christianized" and that those who bore them were released, defenseless, into worldly autonomy. The danger itself became apparent, of all things, in the fact that the Christian heritage itself which the emigrants took along, turned about perniciously and self-destructively during the supersession of the proclamation of Law and Gospel which now took place. In this the path led everywhere (either clearly or concealed) from neutrality towards the Message, to conscious antagonism. But it is just the Anti-Christ of which it is said that "they went out from us"; but, then, "they were not of us" (1 John 2:19).

Schiller (after preparatory work by Herder and Fichte) thus took up and transformed "the Mosaic document" of the fall of man. According to him, the original state is that of the childhood of mankind, protected by instinct. The fall of man is the step into majority and responsibility. Man himself could now become "the creator of his bliss". He was to "learn to seek again the state of innocence which

he had now lost, and return to it by his reason as a free spirit." "Therefore the philosopher has the right to congratulate human nature upon this important step." It is only logical when, in the same Schiller's „Glocke“ (the bell), Christ no longer enters the company of the figures of life. This was the last of the secular catechisms whose obligations were still regarded as reasonably binding, the last in which the arch of life was still, once more, fully drawn. We do not now want to trace the tragic procession of autonomous culture and learning right into the wanton or despairing play with the *nihil*, down into resignation or the defiant "nevertheless" of Existentialism. That has, anyhow, been done often enough. It was only the example that mattered.—

How much Christian heritage was carried along by the liberal economic concept of a pre-established harmony of interests is not quite as obvious; it can be established all the same. The classic formulation in Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* states that man is directed by an unseen hand so serve a purpose which he had not intended. How soon did belief in a benevolent nature (Smith) have to be exchanged for the assumption of a malignant one (Malthus) or one which was radically indifferent towards man (Ricardo)! Whenever nowadays the writings of the "neo-liberal" school are questioned about the spiritual origin of the ground-rules of market-conformity, etc. which they describe with such virtuosity, then a multiplicity of answers are given: they range from the "cultural values of Western civilization" via a loan from Natural Law to Schopenhauer and right into depth psychology, etc; and they lay bare most frighteningly the private character of such metaphysics and their inner impotence in the face of the consistent solidity of, for instance, the bolshevist interpretation of the world.

The engineers soon joined the throng with a technological utopia: the fancy that the iron slaves (or the "iron angels") could take the place of human servitude. The talk should now no longer be about the kingdom of God but about the *regnum hominis*; this presupposition is clearly formulated with Bacon; with the sainted Thomas Morus and with the Calabrian monk Thomas Campanella (and that is, with the fathers of this brand of utopia) it was tacitly self-understood. This Kingdom of Man, however, was propounded from the beginning in the image of Revelation 7:15—17: In it there are neither hunger nor thirst, and no tears. And the technological utopia (as all great utopias) is not content to remain a land-of-nowhere (*οὐτόπος*) but wants to become reality, place (*τόπος*). A historical path does, then, lead into it, but none leaves it: time piles up within it. And just as the great

utopia lives by the force of the desire of man who feels self-responsible and strives beyond himself by his own strength, just so its fictional interim in bourgeois society is still secretly oriented towards it: "Men like Gods" (H. G. Wells). The end is very different and yet consistent: the "iron angels" now appear as vampire-like demons who destroy man who created them (Orwell: 1984; Huxly: *Brave New World*). The force of desire has been changed to fear and has become, in description of the possible, gruesomely close to reality.

In all the above one can perceive that, for all that, it is still a question of beginning with the transformation of the image of man in the Bible which sees man as the "poor" before God. Nowhere has this been as consciously formulated as with the prophets and tribunes of the proletarian battle for emancipation. The young Marx, in the conception of his goal, no longer speaks of the "poor" but of the "rich" and "essential" man. He, standing on "the firm, well-founded earth" is not a creature but, as "original creation" (*generatio aequivoca*) he is, in his prototypes, *causa sui*. He "realizes" himself in world history, by his work. He does not die. Death is, indeed, "the grievous victory of the race over the individual", but rich man is so rich that the individual is incapable of secreting the abundance. Just as he is an "ensemble" of social qualities, so again only society is capable of fully expressing the riches of man. This man must not "be dependent" upon a "being above him", else he would be "inessential". And yet he now has become "a stranger unto himself", bourgeois as much as proletarian. Only the bourgeois still possesses "the semblance of a human existence" through the wealth of goods which he did not create, which do not bear the stamp of his being. Therefore he feels "happy in this self-estrangement". The proletarian, however, who is separated from the product of his work and thus from the expression of his being, no longer suffers "a special injustice, but simply injustice as such"; he is in his appearance "the total loss of man" which can be cured only "by the total restauration of man". That is why victory in the "Heaven-storming struggle" of the proletariat will solve "the riddle of history". It will bring about the final era of the "classless society" in which "all fountain-springs of co-operative wealth" will flow more richly.

The Situation of the Emigrants Today

The "rich man" is comparable to the original state, "estranged man" to the fall of man, "re-integrated man" to the state of salvation. Thus even the most radical revolt will still borrow the colors

for its picture of the universe from the Bible. The Marxist history of salvation corresponds formally with the Christian one. In contents, however, the most violent contrast gapes unbridgeably. The Lord rejected Satan's offer of "the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them". Here, they are claimed. The discussion with Marx takes place in the area of tension between God and the tempter. But the latter is a "liar"; "when he lies, he speaks according to his own nature" (John 8:44). He turns everything upside down.

Marx tragically missed the man he searched for. In *Das Kapital* the essential man who, through his work, realizes himself has shrunk into the "process necessary to nature" of a working force, abstractly universally human. The solidarity of the fighting proletariat, so emphatically shaped by Marx, turns out to be, in our days of disillusionment concerning the Marxists' final goal, nothing but the organization of "reduced humanity"—to use a word of the young Marx, differently than intended, but meaningfully. In this solidarity the eyes are switched to "straight ahead" position, on ground level, and directed into the future into which the heart has already been cast. As presuppositions this solidarity demands the good worker and the good fighter. For the purpose of production and struggle it is irrelevant whether the fighter and the worker are a good father and son, whether they are good lovers, etc. While confidence was intact, the dangers here involved were covered up well; to-day they have come again into the open as liability in neglect and as a dwindling away of any meaning in the world.—

A thoroughly appalling picture has therefore been drawn of the young worker who accepts the fruits of his forebears' struggle without himself wanting to fight, standing at the level of his "engagement at point zero" as the unexpected and undefined heir. (See Bednarik's analysis, questionable in detail but convincing as a whole, *Der junge Arbeiter von heute — ein neuer Typ* [Today's young worker: a new type]: Stuttgart, 1953.) Wherever we may turn our glance: the hope of the emigrants from Christ's Congregation has been severely damaged and shaken. Its place has been taken by intoxication with performance and with sport, by resignation, by nihilistic games with former ideals, or by despair: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die" (1 Cor. 15:32). Neglect spreads in the form of an "infirmity of encounter" in which the "I" does not find a "You". If, because of that, the personality remains undiscovered then, with frightening assurance, the category of "One", of general experience, can be filled in, and a "being thrown" will be stabilized in the place of the "calling". If, in this, "freedom" will be understood ever more

legalistically and less responsibly, then it will continuously be drained and will attract, as if magnetized, its opposite pole, the "collective".

In the collective, freedom will soon be unmasked as "bourgeois prejudice". Now everyone will again be placed into service and directed to his station. Since he remains undiscovered as a person, the picture of an order in society will be derived from the point of view of a technological aggregate. Function and "performance" will be raised to become the true predicates of "being human". Consequently, any life weak in performance or incapable of performance is not worthy of life. Man will be understood instrumentally, as something like a lever or a screw, so to say. But since the social aggregate still has anthropological presuppositions, he is a lever and a screw with a consciousness. All this can still be carried out in a sphere of ostensible neutrality; it may seem as if (as Technocracy, for instance) it could be developed into a new Humanism through "human relations" and the welfare state. But the collective, because of its presuppositions, will be driven increasingly also to "fix" "ideology" (Weltanschauung)—and thus it will become a counter-church. And this, in turn, will be constituted not just "anyhow" but, in both its fascist and its bolshevist shape, becomes of necessity and consciously anti-christian.—

It is characteristic of the situation that both the empty freedom and the collective are still determined by all the groups of emigrants which we have noted.—

The New Relationship of Church and World

Into this situation Christ must be proclaimed as the hope of the world!—As Christ's Congregation remembers this her obligation, she will first of all become aware of her own poverty. Each emigration has weakened her internal tension and left her more "*petit bourgeois*". Thus she has no longer been able to contribute anything to "cultural refinement" (Bildung); to the economist and his "industrial barony" she became a mere object; she lost the capacity for a Christian evaluation and penetration of technology—something which she did have to recognize as needful (notwendig)—as need-transforming (Not-wendend). In trepidation over the proletarian revolt she began to look behind her, and thus she lost the coming social order from view. She was unable to draw into herself the new technological and commercial middle-class which was "neutralized" in the social struggle. Because "Christian" and "bourgeois" drew closely together, the

threat to one appeared as threat to the other; and "throne and altar" took up defensive positions side by side.

In this turning-back, the apparently christianized spheres of the family, the village, the small town, the trades were fenced in. But today ruin dwells within the compound. The supposed inevitability of autonomous laws in economics made a caricature of the doctrine of the two kingdoms; a caricature in which the week-day was allotted an autonomous economic morality and Christian inwardness was assigned to Sundays and holidays until, finally, "work and performance intoxication" flooded the area of inwardness as well.

The Third Article of the faith was left unknown and unpracticed by the isolation into the individual of the doctrine of justification by faith alone (and it should not only have been held fast but was crying for new, powerful and authoritative proclamation); an individual who did not feel himself freed to walk within the congregation and in the "way" of the faith. Through the dissatisfaction with all this, part of the Congregation was inevitably forced into sectarianism. The sect ever again reminds the Congregation of her omissions. But in its segregation it will itself be forced lovelessly to show off its otherness and to spoil eschatology—overlooked in bourgeois Christianity—by turning it into apocalyptic calculation.

But wherever God's Word is preached, wherever the Sacraments are administered, the salutary presence of the Lord can never quite be blacked out. That is why, even in that time of the impoverishment of the Congregation, there were still witnesses (e. g. the deaconesses) to the fact that the love of Christ is abroad when you speak of the darkest sides of life. During the harrowing struggle for man in the industrial age which never ceased from Wichern to the religious socialists, Father Bodelschwingh's reverence-inspiring figure stands ever more clearly before us. Even in the encrustment of the lowest bourgeoisie, the confidence of life and death in Christ maintained and renewed itself.

And then it pleased God through His judgements to teach us again how to praise and give thanks. During the worst oppression of His Congregation she found the confidence and the certainty that Jesus Christ, God's assurance of the forgiveness of sins is, with equal earnestness, "God's forceful claim to our whole life" (Barmen Confession 2). With this, the isolation between Christians was broken here and there in camp and imprisonment, during nights of bombs, and on the trek of those expelled from their home; and Congregation was experienced anew. And in the face of total void in hope and security there arose new and inexplicable confidence and certitude.

The living God proved to be He "who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist" (Romans 4:17). This is not the place to describe how this became fruitful in the contrasted and yet closely related formulations of the renovated liturgy and social ethics, and also in dogmatics. Here, a different insight is urgent and presses hard for attention: There is a new relevancy between Congregation and world.

The draining of freedom includes that of personality. Thus you can discover that the Commandments lost their seriousness and their meaning equally with loitering young people and with highly cultivated intelligence; theft is seen not as sin but as bad luck in organizing, and life-destroying experiment is regarded as a duty. In isolation the matter will simply rest here. But if a collection of individuals, each regarding himself as null and vain, unite into a "we" however precarious, then a path is opened into buried passages. A new person with whom contact may be established is discovered on the road towards the "we". In this "we" the prayer which casts out fear becomes a possibility. In it is rooted a hope against hope, in it Congregation and world meet in new assurance. One can testify to this from the view-point of pastoral care: it comes alive in apparently rootless origin in the industrial cell group, the student congregation, the Evangelical Academy, in the neighborhood of a congregation of expellees. The Christian's responsibility is being apprehended in experience, and this on the fringe of the established parish; therefore it is perilously encountered in a multiplicity of groups.

Wherever such a tie of faith is newly experienced, it is limited to the circumscribed orbit of the place of business, the profession, the housing development, etc. And there it recognizes in the encounter with the neighbor that love reaches out as far as ear can hear and eye can see. In measurable space, however, man's poverty then becomes so immeasurable in the fulfilment of the commanded obligation that the entreaty of the forgiveness of sins becomes a prayer necessary to life itself. If, in such a condition, the Christian consciously wants to become "light", or may even want to see his own light shine before him, he will soon be convicted of delusion or presumption. The promised light will shine, as it were, behind his back. For only the devotion which, in darkness, is still sure of the light can heal the injury to the fine texture of the relationship of man to man.

The remark about darkness is anything but a picturesque manner of speech. Since the limitations of the encounter are felt very clearly, the world-encompassing power of the collective puts in an appearance,

no less than neglect as a symptom of the age. Defection is so very much a real power that not to see this would be self-deception. And because the encounter in the measurable finds such an immediate biblical basis, because the concrete peril demands concrete answers and relief, the thought of something like a Christian world-order as a counter-point to the collective presents itself as a utopia or temptation. Would it, too, not soon take on the characteristics of the collective? Thus one has to accept the existence of the collective as one of God's secrets in guiding the world, just as salvation is felt as a grace of God. For the hope for Christ's final victory by no means includes the thought of a progressive transformation of the world. The Anti-Christ belongs to the experience of faith; the certitude of biblical truth experienced in the encounter testifies to the truth of biblical eschatology.—If one could only properly express the fact that this does not create passivity! but that through the end, content and responsibility are granted to the present, and even the beginning is clarified: Whatever points beyond the discontinuity of encounter to the possibility of newly establishing the arch of life does make the question about the order of creation into an urgent one.

And now it must not be overlooked that some sort of echo from the world can be perceived. From syndicalist experiments right up to Tito and the attempt at co-operative life in Kibbuz and Kwuzza in Palestine, from the politico-sociological re-evaluation of the "team", of neighborhood and human relations, there stretches a wide arch of possibilities which try to grasp, so to speak, Congregation as a sociological formation in opposition to organic community or to society; and this with different accentuations and, at times, actually contradictory ones. But Congregation can live only as Congregation of the Lord. If this is not said in unfounded presumption, then the responsibility of Christ's Congregation for society is truly apprehended.

Such responsibility reaches into the spheres of the collective. In how far this may help to conquer it inwardly does not depend on our desires but on God's possibility to be mighty in the weak and effectively to maintain the withholding (*κατέχον*) order (1 Thess. 2:6).

OLOV HARTMAN

The Christian in His Vocation

It is important to note that the Evanston discussion on the Christian in his Vocation falls within the framework of the theme "Christ—the Hope of the World"—the dominating theme of the Assembly. The preparatory conferences have emphasized again and again that Christian hope must face and deal with the realities of daily life. For the Church, the daily work of its members naturally represents the widest area of contact with the world, and neither the Church nor the world can be seriously touched by preaching which avoids these realities and lives in abstractions. We can hardly imagine a hope which has nothing to do with our work. It is essential to the Christian faith that eschatology concerns the whole man, his work as much as his prayer.

It is, further, characteristic of Christian hope—and this was expressed clearly during the preparatory discussion at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey—that it is not based on vague speculations, but on historical events in which the thoughts of God have become visible. The life, death, and resurrection of Christ are a pledge to show that this hope is not merely an illusion.

The hopes upon which this world builds, based as they are on now greater, now lesser human achievement, are transitory, since all things shall pass away. But Christian performance, also, stands under the judgement of God. Nevertheless, a secret hope lives in these passing efforts. They expect something; those who in their work believe in Christ place their work into the soil like a grain of seed. They know well that this seed will perish but they trust, nonetheless, that all things, both the successful and the ones that failed, those preserved by history and those long since forgotten in all chronicles, that all these will partake of the secret of the grain of seed and shall bear fruit for eternal life. We do not build the kingdom of God, for that will always be God's realm and not ours. But through the remission of sins our work takes part in the promise of life eternal, and just because of this we may know that our work "is not in vain in the Lord". During the discussion at Bossey this question was brought clearly into focus by the eschatology of the New Testament.

But remission of sins and hope of eternal life do not exempt you

from obedience to God's commandments, nor from that faithfulness by which good and bad works will be judged.

Here the discussion begins to deal with questions which have been treated more diligently, perhaps, in Luther's teaching than elsewhere. Rather than repeat the preparatory discussion of Bossey and add a few Lutheran comments, I should like to make the attempt of confronting the Reformation's teaching on vocation with the contemporary problems of labor. At the point where paths divide in the ecumenical discussion I should, to be sure, like to make clear how this presentation confirms or questions the points of view there established.

We cannot grasp the problem of the meaning of work in Lutheran tradition if we do not observe the difference between Law and Gospel. The distinction between these two gifts of God is indispensable, whether in regard to our welfare or to our salvation. For if we turn Gospel into Law, we sink into despair, and if, again, we make Law into Gospel, we land in presumption. Now there can be no doubt as to where work belongs: it is something we do under the Law. Consequently, when we seek enlightenment as to the meaning of work we must endeavor to understand the meaning of the Law. Here Lutheran tradition speaks of three ways of fulfilling the Commandments of God—which also implies three ways of performing work.

The first use of the Law aims at making life on earth endurable. We must be solicitous concerning acts of love in order to preserve the lives of our neighbors, and our own. And if we ask which are these acts of love, we encounter the ten commandments and they direct us towards our vocation. At the same time they tell us something about our neighbor whom to serve in this vocation is now our task. Were it not so, the commandments would impose on us a service which we might choose at random, a service which might be a disservice. Consequently there is a close connection between the Law and the doctrine of Creation.

Thus, if we try to know the basic needs of our neighbor, we are first of all informed that in all his work he has a special relationship to God, either as his friend or as his enemy. Therefore the first commandment says he should, above all things, in all things, and through all things which he might do, fear and love God. This is truly an epitome of all our work: In everything that the other commandments enjoin we stand in relation to God, and neither by performing nor by neglecting our duties can we escape this fact. The second and third commandments are a consequence of this fact, in as much as they lead us to prayer and to the Word of God. At the

same time they remind us that our neighbor, too, has a right to a devout life and, consequently, to our assistance in building it up.

If now the Law in its "second table", the seven other commandments, directs us to take account of our neighbor's earthly concerns, this too comes under the main heading of the first commandment: These concerns are God's concerns. We cannot neglect them and at the same time fear and love God. That our neighbor is created by Him and for Him is of importance especially in these very relationships. His human worth does not stand apart as something spiritual, isolated from his family and his society, his love and his work.

The preparatory discussion at Bossey has also clearly emphasized that the thought of a vocation should not be reserved for only such tasks concerning which we anyhow ordinarily speak of a vocation or a call in a special manner. For a Lutheran it should be something actually exciting that all the world nowadays talks about the fact that a Christian's service neither begins nor ends at the church-door, and that the Christian does not carry on an alien pursuit when he fulfils his every-day duties.

If we follow this direction of our vocation, the first sphere of activity into which the commandment of God will place us is service to our neighbor in his relation to his parents and to the historical tradition from which he has sprung. The fourth commandment tells us that charity begins at home, be it in our own household or in our neighbor's house: At any rate there is the place about which the word about your neighbor was originally spoken. Thus God's commandment calls us so to assist our neighbor as will produce a community in which his people, his class, his family can "live long". But he also has a right to our help and aid "in all dangers and needs of life", as an individual, as a fruit of history which may not even have turned out so very well. This fragment of biological life is sacrosanct, and we dare not cause it suffering. If the fifth commandment was thus concerned with your neighbor's safety and health—which quite properly finds expression in factory legislation (protection of workers), in sufficient holidays and leisure, and in old-age protection—then the sixth commandment proceeds to his marriage where his life reaches out for the future. His love and his home where he lives with his beloved, his opportunities to provide for her and their children, his faithfulness during the long years of toil—all these stand under the guidance of Heaven, they are human value.

The seventh commandment does not concern only his posses-

sions which are, in a sense, a field of power for all that the other commandments award him. Rather, it also represents a commandment to diligence, and it finds such expression in, for instance, Swedish tradition. "Industriousness furthers health and prosperity, it checks opportunities for sin, helps us to resist evil desires, and contributes to consolation and strength of mind in adversities", says the catechism of 1810. But already Luther's Small Catechism speaks not only of man's "property" but also of his "livelihood". Thus he has a right to work just as he has a right to prayer, and we should, perhaps, not forget that it is his "livelihood" which is, by our help, to be "improved and protected" just as much as his property which he has inherited or acquired. This personal attachment gives us something to ponder whenever our neighbor must do such things as are contrary to his natural gifts and his individuality. But this our neighbor lives not merely in the church, the home, and his place of work, he also lives in what we say about him. The eighth commandment deals with precisely this. His life in the newspapers and novels, his honor in the community and before the law, his reputation among his acquaintances and relatives, all these are connected with what he accomplishes in his work. The eighth commandment may very well affect the progress or promotion of a working man.

The tenth commandment is connected with these matters, because it reminds us of our fellow's friends and colleagues, not to mention his wife. It is a question of personal solidarity which exists, according to Luther's explanation, not only between a married couple but also between fellow-workers. This solidarity on the one hand appears to be out of tune with the modern spirit, on the other it is a problem of utmost topicality. But preceding the tenth we have the ninth commandment, revealing concupiscence on its serpentine way from heart to hand, from man to fellow-man. By their attack upon this concupiscence, the last two commandments act as searchlights turned on the inner life—here, too, we have a responsibility one for another.

As has already been hinted, this tradition has worn an utterly different aspect at different periods of history. It has been arrayed in many garments which have now been worn out. Since, however, we have from the beginning intended to deal with modern problems, we have already expressed the fact that this tradition is, still today, decisively relevant. What has become inadequate is not its interpretation of man himself, nor can we say that the main paths of duty indicated in this tradition have become impassable for modern traffic. What has made this doctrine of work appear impossible is, rather,

that the preaching of it has seemed long since dead to listeners, especially as regards the use of the fourth and the seventh commandments. In a pratriarchal society work is naturally conceived as a duty of obedience to authority, that is, a result of the duty of obedience to one's parents. But it is not only children who grow, the same thing may happen to whole nations or to certain classes of society. The question is whether the fourth commandment in its original meaning does not already premise something of this sort. For why should children have to be urged to honor their parents if they had never attained an age where they might possibly also scorn them. And, one day, also the seventh and the tenth commandments in their discussion of work and shared responsibility, of social equalization and social agreements must show the significance which they should long have held by original intent. The misfortune was that the Church clung to Genesis while history had long since advanced into the Book of Judges which simply does no longer deal with patriarchs but with a people in unrest and developing by struggle between outrage and right.

In the preparatory ecumenical discussion it was pointed out again and again and with great emphasis that a very unchristian differentiation in the scale of occupations has been accepted and is even being preached. It is regarded as more Christian to be a pastor or a deaconess than to work in a factory and, moreover, there seems to exist a spiritual scale on which, for instance, teachers, doctors, and social workers appear closer to churchly interests than, for instance, businessmen and engineers. I shall later return to this unchristian way of thought which has actually been the reason for the low regard in which certain branches of work are held. At the moment I just want to call to mind that such a division of the professions makes it impossible to apply God's ten commandments in the world of modern work. It has indeed contributed to making these commandments into something unimportant for large groups of the population. This is a fact which, again, is reflected in current usage of language itself: For one considers it quite natural to speak of the pastor's occupation as a calling but not of the occupation of an unskilled laborer or a waitress.

Here we should also consider what it may mean that Christ did not come to destroy the Law. The Incarnation is a mighty sermon which tells us whither God has turned His face and that, indeed, He has stretched His arms downwards. God has made Himself equal unto the very least among the brethren, and this not only in theory or "legally", but in the flesh. Thus our service is a following of Christ's

way to his neighbor, and this does not mean a following in only the "spiritual" or "religious" sense. The differentiation between sacred and profane work should finally have been made obsolete. Not even the thorn of the earth, the curse of our labor, is profane since the Second Adam wore it as a crown.

If we ponder all this, our thoughts seem to turn, quite by themselves, to the second use of the Law. For particularly when we encounter the fulness of the Law in Christ, it is a serious and sometimes terrible aid to what the Church calls "knowledge of sin", and this precisely is the second aim of the Law. It is through this that we are compelled to seek our justification by faith alone and not through works.

The second use of the Law does not concern the individual only. The sin which we must recognize is also the sin of the world and of mankind. Oftentimes the meaning of work has been discussed in such a way as implied that work was a necessity. It is indeed a little astonishing for us not to see its meaning—as if the Scriptures had not long taught us that "Cherubims and a flaming sword" (Gen. 3:24) guard the way to the Meaning. This astonishment is close to despair, the despair which seizes us when we can nowhere discern the meaning and have tried in vain to create meaning where there was none. Without the Law we do not so soon realize this "in vain". This is especially true if we want all our enterprises to take place in the name of Christ. But the first one to invite him to establish a kingdom out of the glory of this world was Satan, and the offer was rejected with the words "you shall worship the Lord, your God, and him only shall you serve". This idolatry may seem very pious, for instance when one tries to convince people that the Church in its organization, or in the way of life of her members, or in her fear of God is building the New Jerusalem on earth, or when it appears as if she wants to create an eternal bliss for the least of the brethren and his like on this earth. How many eternal kingdoms of this kind shall yet be overthrown before the Antichrist is finally judged! For instance, it is not correct when *A Christian Doctrine of Work* (Bossey, 1949) maintains that the Soviet Union regards work "only as a means to material success". The Soviet Union has Messianic roots. Its doctrine of the material is suffused by religion. It is eschatological: It is a question of creating a Meaning for a last fight. Everything exists for the least of the brethren—and yet always he is the one who suffers. It would still be the same if we were to establish a kingdom of charity in the patterns of democracy and inwardly think: "Wherefore do we need the love of God if we have our own?"

Berdyaev's idea that we should be God's co-creators could be applied similarly. And, indeed, such points of view have continuously reappeared during the ecumenical discussion, even though their doubtfulness was recognized. That we are created as instruments for God's continuous act of creation, that, according to God's Law, our work is in a special sense intended to be "ours", that we are called to have dominion over all creation and things does not justify this dangerous "co" in the word "co-creator". In the arts it comes dangerously close to Valéry's well-known description of poetry: "It is the best way of putting ourselves in God's place."

When God's Word tests our work, such wings are clipped. Nowhere is it written that we might not make life fairly endurable, that we should not abolish poverty or bring about peace on earth. The first use of the Law gives plenty of scope for bold deeds. But the tower will never reach Heaven, as the Law assures us in its second use. Not even the church-tower—for prayer is as remote from the Meaning as work. Here all the lies of propaganda must fall silent, the religious as well as the political.

But in this silence waits the Gospel. And the Gospel says that the Meaning shall be made manifest when time is broken and all the stars have fallen from the heavens. There it stands in our midst, not as an "explanation" for everything, nor as a grandiose welfare-program or a theological system, but as forgiveness bearing the crown of thorns: Jesus Christ, God's mercy and grace in the depth of our despair. And this Meaning, nailed to the cross and illuminated by the love of God is more than just an idea. The gospel says that it became flesh and dwelt among us; it stands before the altar with bread in its hands.

But why bread?—Because the Word became flesh in our work. This fact is concealed by much spirituality and many liturgical niceties. It is surrounded by heavy layers of pious oddity. But agriculture and industry are placed on the altar through the words of institution; they found their place there in that night in which the Lord Jesus was betrayed. Thus the totality of our social reality has been incorporated into the evangel of Christ. From this it obtains its meaning: we share it with Him. This is also called the remission of sins. But what we do not see in the concealed glory of the bread, that which in the World of Light belongs to the Firstling from among those raised from the dead, that we shall see at another time, in the resurrection of the body. For eternal life does not, as has often been imagined, pertain to a group of "souls", a collection of ideas and individualities. It pertains—though in a way which no eye has seen

nor any ear has heard—to the whole of our reality as human beings, only excluding sin. It pertains to the “flesh”, to society, to work. The New Jerusalem is not a pleasant green for strollers through eternity; it is a city.

But this side of eternity there is only the Old Jerusalem, and the road to the New does not lead through the improvement of the Old. Our union with the kingdom of God is in Him who was crucified there for the sake of our misdeeds. “Our” union—that means union for our social reality, for factories and parliaments, for street regulations of this Old Jerusalem. That is the meaning of work. The secret of the social sphere is concealed in the sacramental.

This has, without doubt, removed our very existence from the power of death and Satan. At this point, a dangerous word has cropped up in the discussion, namely, the word redemption. With this word we intended to express Christ's deed of changing a fallen world into a new and better one by virtue of self-sacrificing love, a love which converts sinners and changes evil into good. Apparently it is of the utmost importance to further elucidate this thought of transformation. Does it imply that through Christ's life and death this world has been improved in a social, political, in a cultural and psychological sense? Or does it deal with the ultimate transformation which really will lead to a new heaven and a new earth?—How important it is to clarify this point is shown by the further course of the debate. For this expresses the belief that the Church is called to serve and to continue Christ's work of redemption until the coming of His kingdom. Are we then, accordingly, in the position to add to this once-completed work of redemption, by our work to help God change this world in order to make life in it more tolerable? Suppose we failed—would the work of redemption become less perfect? On the other hand, suppose we succeeded—would the world be more redeemed than it was on Golgotha?

The question seems to be whether, out of the Lutheran point of view, a better, more acceptable sense—if we dare use such momentous words so heedlessly—of this thought might be developed than: We and our work, the civilized and the uncivilized world, life and work of Heathens as well as Christians have been redeemed, once for all, by Jesus Christ our Lord. And the Word of God, summoning through the ages, gathers, illuminates, and sanctifies the Church on earth. It encloses and preserves all things until the time of judgment and unto the resurrection which awaits us. Thus redemption is something which is always present. If we were to call this a continuation or a completion of Christ's redemption then, according to

Lutheran understanding, we can contribute nothing but a constant testimony to what has been completed. Or to speak with the words used by the Swedish reformer Laurentius Petri as he applies Christ's final sacrifice to the Holy Communion: "The Mass is concerned with the sacrifice which Christ, our High Priest, once offered on the cross."

Let us now return to what we considered above. The social sphere has its secret concealed in the sacramental. Therefore it is to be used as the Law prescribes. We find ourselves not just "somewhere", but in a situation which we share with Christ. If we have died with Him and have risen from the dead, then we should, as Paul says, yield our members to God, to righteousness for sanctification. They belong to the body of Christ. (This line of thought is found in Romans 6.) How else should we offer thanks for the meaning of our life, the meaning which we have recovered by grace? Then only is the Law ready to show us the way, and that is the third use of the Law.

Otherwise we might well build ourselves tabernacles on the Mount of the Transfiguration and try to imitate Heaven by celebrating Sunday all week long. Or we might go out among the people and simply talk, talk, and talk of the things which we have experienced. Or we might take congregational life as a pattern for what we strive for in society; well understood, of course, an idealized congregational life. Fundamentally, that would be the same as if in social work we took the individual Christian as a starting-point and tried to shape the world in his image. In ecumenical discussion this has not always been observed. In the one case we are concerned with the sinful individual in the other with sinful society. The Law in its second use has already pointed out this difference. But now the Law releases us to take up, once again, the same dusty service of duty as in the first usage. The fact that it is a congregation which meets around the bread of grace merely tells us—although this is important enough and will be dealt with later in detail—that God loves the world, loves it so much that through the love of Christ we have penetrated to the obscure problems of the multitudes in the world; and in this sense we have lost our private life: "Ye are not your own." But our mission to these multitudes is none other than service, a service which the atheistic worker at my side might carry out at least as well as I myself. Not to mention the Good Samaritan who also was not a Christian and yet surpasses us both without even thinking that he did something remarkable. Thus we are placed alongside the "others", with those who in their attitude and way of thought are truly wholly "other". And we have no reason to boast of knowing better than they

the solutions to social or political problems. The Law does not lead us to solutions but to the problems. To walk humbly alone under the conditions of work and in this to contemplate the insecurity of conditions below where our neighbor lives, that is the service to which we are called.

The Lutheran doctrine of the two kingdoms has often been misunderstood as implying a tacit recognition on the part of the Church of a "self-made law" in matters of the world. The Swedish reformers understood this doctrine differently. They saw in it the basis for a fearless attitude towards authority, an attitude which has had its effect right into the later periods of the history of our church. But if God's Law must thus be preached in the face of all the conditions of our time then it will place truly everything under its judgement. And we cannot set up "Christian" factories, "Christian" novels, "Christian" social institutions as a sort of exception to this rule. In recent decades we have had to notice how in many ways the world has made itself increasingly independent of the preaching of the church because of "Christian Panaceas" for all kinds of problems. The use of the Law has thus become a monopoly of those groups which have the necessary special knowledge. Indeed, a revival of the doctrine of the two kingdoms is urgently required. God's Word should be preached so that it concerns all our work as a whole; and with this message in our ears we should tackle the "every-day" things. Our every-day work, our every-day politics, our every-day love.

In the preparatory discussions it was said again and again that the Church ought to proclaim God's Law of the common every-day things with a totally new understanding of every-day problems. All too often up to now, the Church has met real conflicts with generalities or with solutions which belonged to periods and to structures of society very different from ours. And therefore these difficulties have been solved without the Church's participation. Naturally, it would be difficult to find any kind of casuistry upon the evangelical way of thought. It is always a miserable thing to turn God's commandment into human statutes and to give to these the same authority as to the commandment itself. But he who searches for enlightenment for his conscience where the Word of God is preached can and must expect of the preacher some insight into his situation. Generally, people are of the impression that the pastors of most churches are much too remote from the realities which fill the life of laymen. And many suggestions have been made how this neglect could be remedied. We do not want to discuss these suggestions here, although it is impossible to over-emphasize the matter. If the Law is

to be relevant, then it should be relevant to our own life, not the life of our grandparents or to some abstraction. And equally, the remission of sins is intended for the life which we now live in the flesh; not a little spiritual Sunday-Isle, but the whole sooty every-day continent.

God's Law, common-sense, earthly striving and earthly aims—that is a sacramental social view. In all this, the kingdom of God is close to us through the forgiveness of sins. Therefore we need not earn it or create it, or sustain it like caryatids support a temple. To serve one's neighbor and to make the best of his and one's own situation according to God's ten commandments—that is all that is needful, and what God may then desire to make of it is His concern.

This task gets on many people's nerves. Preaching seems so much more impressive and parish work appears to be so much more Christian than factory-work on the assembly-line. It is always easier to bear a cross when it resembles the one which Christ bore. Much abuse would have been spared Christianity if it had not been so strangely eager to attach the name of Christ to cultural work and social achievements, accomplished by Christians very frequently in a rather unchristian manner. Ultimately this is a matter of belief or unbelief. The question is whether God is not capable of acting through anonymous service, even very trivial and meaningless service, just as through a brilliant lecture in the Christian spirit. Simone Weil represents a salutary warning—what theological professorship could have accorded her achievement a greater impact than this work which she did somewhere in utter "meaninglessness". The answer is, once again, the bread in the hand of Christ.

This eschatology of work is not concerned with results or efficiency. It was never intended for any heavenly form of existence. It belongs to our meaninglessness; that is why there was a Good Friday. Nothing in the modern development of work need estrange us from this interpretation. It is always still a question of service, be it as nameless as the mill which first ground flour for bread for Holy Communion or as monotonous as picking grapes in a vineyard; or as unsuccessful as St. Andrew the Apostle's attempt to solve the problem of the feeding of the five-thousand. Even though the work be not a service for all but be done merely for the wife and children of the worker, it is still his daily bread.

It may be objected that this way of looking at things is all too quick with its reference to the consolation of heaven in order to make the injustice of the world more bearable. This objection is important and it has, as is well-known, played an important part in history. And if

in this manner men were indeed to be made content with the injustice of this world, then it would be more than justified. If we equate loyalty to what is called "the established order of things" with faith in the kingdom of God, it is the same as identifying a certain kind of class-struggle with the final solution of all problems. In both cases certain patterns of political action are "Messianised". We must not forget that it is part of a worker's work, responsibly to take up his social and political situation.

As a matter of fact, the idea of vocation must be extended in such a manner that it comprises more than what occurs within the orbit of the individual every-day life. A Dutchman (van Biemen) has recently pointed out that the word "responsibility" must become a key-word in this connection. The individual is responsible for the group. He must ask himself what he contributes when, in his profession, he serves a larger community. It is not enough to inquire whether he serves individuals; rather, we must question further whether his service can be acknowledged as part of an all-inclusive structure of service. His labor-union, his branch of industry, his town, his country—all these are not only ordeals and gifts which he has to face or which he must accept as coming from above. On the contrary, he is himself responsible for all these; they all belong under the Law of God. The idea of vocation must be freed from its individualistic limitations in order to become a living force in business, in industry, and in politics. This is such a difficult problem that it may appear almost hopeless, since large, well-organized areas in all countries have developed without discipline and without aspiring after the Word of God. But here we also have a call to meet these difficulties.

The worker's situation does not concern only himself. It is not his private concern whether he accepts what is evil in it, or not. It may even be his Christian duty to be a revolutionary; and if he possesses the kingdom of God by grace alone, if Heaven arches above him in sheer love, then he need not fear to be unsuccessful on earth. There is nothing which could separate him from love in Christ. Therefore he can devote himself to his earthly problems with all the greater dauntlessness, soberness, and perception. He has been delivered from the world. Therefore he can be faithful to it. He has been delivered from men. Therefore he can serve them.

There is the additional fact that from this other point of view also, his situation is not only his own concern. For it is Christ's situation, and it is thus that others—his superior as much as his subordinate, his own parliamentary candidate as much as his political opponent—it is

thus that they have encountered it at the Lord's Table. If later they regard this situation as something unimportant, and if they try to avoid it by "charity" or friendly condescension then they know not what they do. They should be reminded of the third use of the Law.

Thus from all points of view the Law's message about work is a message of service. If a man finds his work meaningless because it does not give expression to his personality and does not allow full play to his inherent abilities, then this is, indeed, an interesting philosophy with roots in classical antiquity—in Greece, to be precise—but it is neither Law nor Gospel. His misfortune is not his work, from a Christian point of view. This work may be a heavy cross, it may require reform from all points of view, but it is not meaningless as long as it is actually a service to the performer's neighbors. Luther's words in the larger Catechism apply: "Should not now our heart start and melt for joy if we, when we go to our work and do what has been enjoined on us, could say, 'Behold, this is better than all the holiness of the Carthusians, even though they fast unto death and pray on their knees unremittingly.' For here you have a clearly defined text and a divine evidence that He has ordained this, whereas not a word has been commanded about this other matter." Luther means that it is at the same time humiliating and wonderful that God does not impose any highly spiritual tasks upon us but is willing to let Himself be served just as much by the "servant-girl's broom". It may seem too little for us, but it is not too little for God. With "typically Christian" deeds one may very well doubt their Christian characteristics. But when a cloakroom-attendant helps another person into his coat then we may be sure that this work has God's blessing and will not be in vain. „Tue, was vor die Hand kommt“ (do what is close at hand), Luther says to him who seeks God's guidance.

What is meaningless is not work, but unemployment. If a doctor does nothing but fill in forms then it is not the filling-in of forms that is meaningless—provided that it is really necessary. What is meaningless is that he is not allowed to serve with his special gifts. His ten years of study stand mutely about him—he is unemployed. And the same may be true of the piece-worker. He possesses sleeping capital of strength and ability which he is quite unable to pass on to someone else.

Here we run the danger that we draw incorrect conclusions from the current scale of skilled work. This does not always coincide with the view, derived from the ten commandments of God, according to which we are primarily called to serve human needs. Nor is it

determined by the image of man as a servant of others, as for instance Luther has pictured it in his explanation to the first article of the Creed: "I believe that God has created me and all living beings, giving me a body and a soul, eyes, ears and all members, reason and all senses..." Occasionally a work of art may well be called immortal, but hardly a well tended field. Nevertheless, both represent service to men's neighbors, and both are derived from the miracle of creation. The field is as close to the heavenly mysteries as the picture on which it is reproduced.

The discussion of these matters is often characterized by traces of a different ethic of work than the Christian one. In this, one likes to escape from the earth with its soot and toil into an existence where the personality holds intercourse primarily with ideals. It is a blessing that the ecumenical discussion contains a rejection of this paganism. To follow Christ is to go in the opposite direction: "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." Here love has fallen from our aristocratic heaven, fallen into flesh, fallen into the dust. Here the Law is fulfilled—in the five realities of the ten commandments: in the sanctuary, the home, the body, in property, in the name. The highest purpose of work is not the wise man at the summit of culture and refinement, but the least among the brethren whom we ought to serve at the lowest point of our existence. In the kingdom of God it is as important to sew one's buttonhole—even perhaps on the endless belt—as to give introductory courses into the philosophy of Plato. This comfort has, at times, been given to buttonhole-makers—but nothing else. But actually it is not a matter of comfort but of one of the facts of God. And this has its significance within the Church and outside it, even if this has so often been forgotten within the Church.

NEW BOOKS

Luther's View of the Church

Some Reflections on Bishop Newbigin's Book

"The Household of God"

Bishop Newbigin's new book on the nature of the Church is undoubtedly the most remarkable publication on the subject. The author moves simultaneously and with admirable skill on the levels of biblical exegesis, theology, Church history and ecumenics. Another remarkable feature of Bishop Newbigin's study is that it is very provocative. It not only provokes thought but also proposes definite questions which provoke a reply. Everybody will benefit from such a study not excluding those who feel provoked to state their disagreements in certain points.

It should, however, be granted that one would hardly do justice to a book like this by accepting it in every detail without critical examination. It is hoped that the nature of Bishop Newbigin's views on Luther and Lutheranism will in itself be acknowledged as sufficient justification for a closer investigation and, if necessary, for a frank expression of disagreement. Any such reply would, of course, be futile if it would set out merely to maintain a supposedly indisputable superiority of Luther and Lutheranism. We should never forget that to avoid even the most subtle kind of Luther worship is an inherent part of our Lutheran heritage itself, and, in addition, that every discussion of Luther and his work should stimulate our self-criticism rather than our desire to glorify the status quo of our Lutheran churches.

Bishop Newbigin's Case against Luther

Bishop Newbigin's starting-point for discussing the Lutheran conception of the Church is the question "How is Christ present to us to-day?" He rightly states the answer of Luther and what he calls "orthodox Protestants": "Christ is present to us in the word of the Gospel truly read and preached, and in the sacraments truly

administered" (p. 49). He appreciates this "intensely dynamic conception of the Church", based on the "truth that the Church is the body of Christ, that He is ever dynamically creative in it and through it". Yet at the same time he finds in it the "obvious defect", brought to light in the later development of Protestantism, "that it gives no real place to the continuing life of the Church as one fellowship binding the generations together in Christ. It makes of the Church practically a series of totally disconnected events in which, at each moment and place at which the word and sacraments of the Gospel are set forth, the Church is there and then called into being by God's creative power" (p. 50). By this conception of the Church the Reformation has unduly neglected the character of the Church as a historical society and very seriously weakened the sense of the unity and continuity of the Church (p. 59). In consequence of this fundamental defect two additional distortions of the Gospel have developed an "over-intellectualising of the content of the word faith" (p. 52) and the "virtual disappearance of the idea of the Church as a visible unity" (p. 54), the latter distortion being mainly due to Luther's way of distinguishing between the visible and the invisible Church.

These statements certainly call for an investigation on the basis of the historical facts, though we should be aware of our collective Protestant responsibility, ready to admit sins of the past and above all, strictly refrain from building up a Luther-apology at any cost. The charges are severe and the implications far-reaching. It is nothing less than the "tragic fragmentation of Christendom" after the Reformation which, in Bishop Newbigin's opinion, is due to that theological defect at the source.

It has long been a familiar experience that Roman Catholic theologians have charged the Reformation with splitting up the unity of the Church universal. Now Bishop Newbigin undertakes to prove that also the unity of Protestantism is, paradoxically enough, a casualty of that same Reformation. He calls this a tragic fact, tragic perhaps in the sense of a child gradually developing a disease that goes back to a congenital defect. Nevertheless he leaves little doubt that, so to say, the major part of the blame goes to the midwife.

The Visible and the Invisible Church

Bishop Newbigin can hardly mean to say that Luther has himself invented that "false and unbiblical distinction". Scholars of the history of Christian doctrine are agreed that it goes back chiefly to

St. Augustine who, in the course of his controversy with the Donatists, came to distinguish between the invisible church, consisting of the elect and the visible church in which there are both elect and non-elect members and which is the instrument of God for bringing about His purpose in history. From then on this distinction, with changing emphasis, runs right through the history of the Church. The visible church is favored by Rome, the later Melancthon, Calvin, and most Reformed Churches, while Wyclif, Hus, Zwingli, the Spiritualists, Anabaptists and Pietists tend to the other extreme (cf. F. E. Mayer, "The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel and the Terminology Visible and Invisible Church". *Concordia Theological Monthly*, March 1954, pp. 177—198).

But does Luther not indeed draw an absolute distinction between what he calls "the two Churches", the "natural essential real true inner Christendom, and a man-made, external, bodily Christendom, though he allows that they ought not to be put asunder and that the latter always has some true Christians in it" (p. 55)? In order to permit a full understanding of this important passage from *The Papacy at Rome* (1520) it will be necessary to read it in full: For then it will at once be realized that Luther certainly does not speak of two churches but of two aspects of the one Church. And the explanation which follows reveals the purpose of the distinction: External membership in the church "does not make true Christians . . . nevertheless this communion is never without some who at the same time are true Christians . . . Those who are without faith and outside the true congregation and are outside the first community, are dead in the sight of God, hypocrites, and but like wooden images of true Christians". All this must of course be viewed in the context of the Roman Church of Luther's time, a church which, as a church, had completely lost the spiritual side, at least in Luther's opinion. There was, so to speak, only the body of a church left in which all true spiritual qualities had been absorbed by a hierarchical and juridical totalitarianism, based on the assumption that salvation is not through faith but through obedience to the commandments of the hierarchy. It is this church against which Luther insists on the spiritual emphasis, and he does so certainly without the slightest intention of offering a perfect and comprehensive theory of the nature of the Church.

Even more difficult to understand is Bishop Newbigin's objection to Luther's protest against the papal ban. Bishop Newbigin very severely criticises this as evidence of a "conception of church-membership as a merely external thing which can be severed with-

out ultimate spiritual harm", and he contrasts Luther's opinion with what St. Paul writes about the excommunication of the erring brother at Corinth in 1 Cor. 5:9—13 (p. 55). Does Bishop Newbigin really mean to put the Roman Church of Luther's day on an equal footing with the apostolic Church of Corinth? Does he really expect that Luther should have recognized the papal ban as something that would cut him off from fellowship in the Body of Christ? And are we to blame Luther for disregarding that ban, when eventually he became a victim of it? We refuse to believe that Bishop Newbigin means this. For in that case the whole Reformation would have been little more than a tragic error, and we should have to repent of it and its consequences.

It seems that Bishop Newbigin in this paragraph, for the sake of his argument against Luther, has considerably overshot the mark. In addition, this section makes one ask whether he is really taking Rome — the Rome of Luther's and the Rome of our time — seriously enough. Here and elsewhere in the book there appears a kind of ecumenical positivism, that is, an unrestricted readiness to accept at face value any group that claims to be Christian as a true member of the Body of Christ. This attitude has, according to Luther, its proper place, inasmuch as by the norm of love we should call every baptized person holy. But Luther knew the other side too: It can happen that a Christian congregation or church has to pass a judgement according to the canon of faith. It may have to say no, to renounce a fellowship, to break a continuity. How else could St. Paul have pronounced Anathema against those who would preach a different Gospel? How else could the early church have fought its life and death struggle against Gnosticism? Bishop Newbigin mocks at the "pharisaism" of those who suppose "some sort of true Church within the Church" (p. 128). Needless to say that the history of the Church knows a large number of such cases which may deserve no better treatment. But it is doubtful whether such a casual reference is the proper way of dealing with such a serious problem.

The Marks of the Church

Returning to Bishop Newbigin's treatment of Luther, one may perhaps say that the brief quotations from Luther's earlier writings hardly give an adequate impression of Luther's conception of the Church, let alone the interpretation which they undergo. It may therefore be in order to add a few remarks on this important point.

It is well known that Luther was not fond of the term "church" because it was open to many different interpretations. Throughout his original Bible translation he renders "Ekklesia" not as "church" but as "congregation", and the real key-word of his conception of the Church is "people of God". This term suggests better than others the double emphasis which is so characteristic for Luther, the emphasis on the creative activity of Christ through Word and Sacrament, and the emphasis on the fellowship of believers and the continuity of the Church. "God's people will never be without God's Word, and God's Word will never be without God's people"—this brief sentence actually contains Luther's ecclesiology *in nuce*.

Luther's concern for finding the true marks (*notae*) of the Church provides additional evidence of his interest in the visibility of the Church. While also in this context the essential hiddenness of the Church is maintained, the marks of the Church would at least allow it to be identified externally. Here again Word and Sacrament occupy, of course, a dominating position. But significantly enough, Luther insists that not the Word *per se* is the mark of the Church—for who could perceive it "*per se*"?—but the publicly preached Word, "not the written but the vocal Gospel", as he once says. In addition there are other marks: prayer, absolution, the ministry, the Christian cross and suffering. Luther has also much to say about mutual love and the sharing of all blessings and evils among the believers. Even these few references may sufficiently prove that he has certainly not separated the Christian faith and life from the continuing fellowship of the Church. It is true that in the theology of orthodox Lutheranism of the 17th century there is a tendency towards spiritualizing the Church. Even today Lutherans sometimes show a kind of escapism which only too readily makes itself at home in an invisible Church in order to avoid certain decisions which are to be taken in the empirical Church or in the ecumenical fellowship of churches, and in this respect Bishop Newbigin's warnings should by no means go unheeded. But these Lutherans are far from Luther, at least in this matter, and it is in any case no more than fair to state that Luther cannot be made responsible for such developments. For him there is only one Church, the congregation of believers which, as a congregation is visible and can be identified by certain external marks, while as a congregation of believers its true nature cannot be established empirically and is a hidden reality.

Church and Doctrine

But it is not true that in Luther as well as in orthodox Lutheranism there is a strong tendency towards "over-intellectualising" the faith, a tendency which, according to Bishop Newbigin, allows or even demands that doctrinal agreement, "which means agreement that can be formulated in written doctrinal statements" is regarded as the one essential basis for Christian unity (p. 53). Is Bishop Newbigin not at least for this reason right in viewing Luther's insisting on the Word as the only true foundation of the Church with deep distrust? Is it not indeed more appropriate to have the unity of the Church based on the unity of the believers with Christ and each other through love (p. 53)? And are we not even more sincerely to repent of the tragic fragmentation of Christendom after the Reformation inasmuch as it goes back to this substituting of doctrine for fellowship, intellectual agreement for love (p. 54)?

Considering this last statement first one need perhaps only point to the contemporary ecumenical discussion in order to indicate how complex the causes of the fragmentation of Christendom really are, and Bishop Newbigin himself would probably not mean to say that they can be traced back to this single theological defect only. But apart from that it must be admitted that in Protestantism after the Reformation there was an increasing tendency towards over-stressing the intellectual element in faith, overlooking the fundamental difference between faith and reason which Luther had emphasized so strongly, and systematizing what cannot be systematized and this, incidentally, both in the Lutheran and the Reformed churches. It was indeed a dangerous and in many ways harmful conviction of this period that "from the testimony of the Scriptures one can reason his way through a complete and intellectually validated system, which is satisfying to the mind and which gives the mind the certainty for which it seeks" (Jaroslav Pelikan, *From Luther to Kierkegaard*, p. 59).

It is, however, unfortunately little known and realized that Luther's conception of doctrine is different from ours and perhaps also closer to the New Testament than ours. Doctrine is, according to Luther, not primarily teaching in the sense of transmitting certain truths from one intellect to another. It is most closely related to the preaching of the Gospel and therefore shares in the specific dynamic and authority of the public proclamation of God's mighty acts. That is why for Luther, as a rule, the terms "preaching" and "doctrine" are interchangeable, just as in Art. VII of the Augsburg Confession the

German word for preaching corresponds to the Latin term for teaching. The essential thing is that for Luther the doctrine of the Church is in form and content qualified by the fact that in and through it, too, the regenerating power of God's Word becomes effective. Doctrine therefore appeals to faith rather than to the intellect. No amount of intellectual understanding of dogmatical doctrines will help unless the Holy Spirit opens the ear of faith for the saving truth of the Gospel. Doctrine in this intensely dynamic sense, as an inseparable correlate to the preaching of the Gospel, is not something optional or unnecessary in the Church but is part and parcel of that most vital function of the Church which Bishop Newbigin so profoundly describes as the apostolate through which God leads the world to its consummation (p. 139). The difference between Luther and Bishop Newbigin is that the latter, attributing to doctrine the traditional narrow intellectual meaning, regards doctrinal statements and doctrinal agreement as of limited value only or perhaps even as unnecessary and dangerous. But if Christ has chosen to be present in the Church through the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments, how can it be irrelevant what kind of a Gospel is preached, what kind of a Christ is proclaimed in the Church?

Yet one question remains: Why were Luther and the Augsburg Confession so incessantly harping on the correct preaching of the Gospel and the right administration of the Sacraments? Luther's experience had taught him that the preaching of the Gospel can never be separated from its interpretation. Both the Roman Church and the Enthusiasts emphatically claimed to be in harmony with the Gospel. But to Luther it was obvious that their preaching and their doctrine, their "*kerygma*" and their interpretation of it were quite different from what he had come to regard as the truth of the Gospel. That is why he even in 1520 found it necessary to state: "The public truth should unite us, not our feeling to be one." He regarded agreement in doctrine as necessary. It was for him not a superfluous or even harmful addition but the very pre-requisite of Church unity.

After all we should be grateful to Bishop Newbigin for drawing our attention to the dangers. They are obvious and very real: If doctrinal statements become ends in themselves, if they are said to be constitutive for the Church or a direct manifestation of God's revelation, then indeed faith would have been perverted into an act of rational consent and the Church into a kind of philosophical or theological society. Let us remind ourselves that our doctrinal statements are instruments, witnesses pointing beyond themselves to

Christ who alone is the truth incarnate. But as safeguards for the true proclamation of the truth, as indicators which unfailingly show aberrations from that truth, they are indispensable for the public preaching of the Gospel and therefore for the whole life of the Church, and in that respect they meet a true and ongoing concern of the Reformation, no matter how much they may be misused. Far from canonizing every aspect and detail of Luther's work we should recognize our duty actively to preserve his legacy, not as a piece of immovable property on which we may rest assured for ever, but as an obligation which calls us to continuous self-examination, renewed devotion to the one truth and sincere readiness to share it with all those who are with us in the Household of God and, in ever closer fellowship with them, to pass it on to those outside.

Hans W. Gensichen

FROM THE WORK OF THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

World Missions

Post-war development of Lutheran missions in Tanganyika

It might be well at the outset to give a brief historical orientation of Lutheran mission work in this Territory. There were five Lutheran missions: The Bethel, Leipzig and Berlin Societies of Germany, the Augustana Mission of the United States and the Swedish Evangelical Society (SES) of Sweden. At the outbreak of World War II, the German missionaries were interned and the Augustana Mission was requested by Government to supervise the German mission fields. We preferred to say that we came to the assistance of the emergent, indigenous churches. Fortunately, the SES was operating in the vicinity of the Southern Highlands area (Ubena-Konde, administered by the Berlin Mission) and was asked to supervise the work there. An appeal was made to the Church of Sweden Mission (CSwM) in Southern Africa to send some missionaries to assist in the Usambara and Bukoba fields which had been operated by the Bethel Mission, and they graciously responded. The Augustana Mission shared its personnel particularly with the area of the Leipzig Mission and also in Usambara.

Naturally, we were concerned as to how the African Christians would stand up under the impact of another world war. And we must record that they responded magnificently, with a deep sense of their own responsibility. This was good training for them, and they had to depend more than ever upon their own leadership and resources. Gradually there was an increase of missionary personnel, and the financial responsibility was assumed by the U.S. National Committee of the LWF, with the Swedish societies more and more assuming the needed finances for the fields in which they were operating.

Later, a General Administrative Committee (GAC) was organized under the aegis of the U.S. Committee, and a general director appointed. This was done in order to unify the work with particular reference to negotiations with the Tanganyika Government. As the work grew, personnel was recruited from the two above-mentioned Swedish societies, two Danish societies and the Finnish Missionary Society. Later, the Lutheran Mission Society of Norway, by mutual agreement, took over one of the smaller SES fields, to release them for much larger work in the Southern Highlands area. Most of the responsibility was carried by the Commission on Younger Churches and Orphaned Missions of the U. S. Committee.

From the very beginning, it was assumed that the care of the orphaned missions in Tanganyika was a Lutheran World Federation responsibility. And when the Commission on World Missions (CWM) was organized, it was understood that it would be the body that would assume responsibility for the former German missions in Tanganyika. In this way the German and Scandinavian mission societies were made to feel that they could consult together and also be impressed with the responsibility both for finances and personnel. During the difficult war years and since that time as well, there has been very close liaison with the Tanganyika Government. Generous grants were paid to all missions and, at the beginning, the Government covered all the cost for the orphaned missions, while the normal grant paid was 85% of the cost. This was rescinded after the end of the war, i. e. the special war grant.

In conformity with the Government 10-year plan for education, there was a great increase in the number of Primary Schools to be erected and staffed. This called for a large increase of financial assistance from the sending churches and the larger part of this was

borne by the U.S. Committee. It also meant additional expenses in the training of many more teachers. These teachers were government certificated, which means that they have passed the Government examinations. Recently there has been a great expansion in conducting Middle Schools. On the whole, therefore, there has been a great increase in the educational facilities for the Africans, most of which is still administered by the missions.

There are also Government grants for the medical work on a smaller scale and the Lutheran missions have kept up a good pace in educational and medical work. We regard both of these as strong evangelizing factors. The African Christians are now very eager to secure additional education, and the great problem is to keep education Christian. The British Government has a very sympathetic attitude to this whole matter of the central place of Christianity and character training as the basis of well-rounded education.

At present, the CSwM and the SES are administering the Southern Highland (Berlin) and Bukoba (Bethel) areas, and CYCOM the Northern (Leipzig), Usambara (Bethel) and Uzaramo (Berlin) areas. The Augustana Mission naturally administers its own field independently in Central Tanganyika. Recently, there has been organized a Lutheran Missions Council (LMC), composed of all the Lutheran missions, which administers the joint institutions: The Theological School, the Secondary School, the Medical Assistants Training School and the Mission Press. Besides this, the LMC meets for consultation on all problems that affect Lutheran mission work in the Territory. There is also a Missions Coordination Committee (MCC) which administers the work in the Northern, Usambara and Uzaramo areas under CYCOM. Further, there is a Federation of Lutheran Churches largely attended by the African Christians themselves, though there is of course missionary representation as well. It is hoped that out of this Federation will grow the beginning of a united Lutheran Church in Tanganyika.

The Lutheran missions are also active members of the Christian Council of Tanganyika (CCT). This is composed of the non-Roman missions (it may be unfortunate that one has to use this negative name in order to satisfy the Anglo-Catholic group [UMCA] of the Anglican Church). The CCT supports an Education Secretary-General who acts as liaison between the missions and Government, particularly in educational matters. The Lutheran missions contribute as much to the costs of the CCT as all the other missions combined.

There are some 200,000 Lutheran Christians in Tanganyika and there is continual growth and expansion. There are some 200 Lutheran missionaries from the United States, Canada, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and Germany, giving a fine example of international cooperation.

The goal, as always, is an autonomous African church. Naturally, there are various degrees of maturity in the fields. The Lutheran Church of Northern Tanganyika is the most advanced, and it should not be too long before they, at least, will attain the status of an independent church and thus be eligible for membership in the LWF. It will take longer for the other areas to attain this status, and since the youngest church (except the small group administered by the Norwegian Society) is that on the Augustana field, it will take quite a long time before they will have reached such maturity.

I should like to refer to the statement in the recently published *Lutheran World*, Volume I, No. 1, written by Dr. Fredrik A. Schiotz:

"March 31, 1954, CYCOM voted to relinquish administration of assistance for all fields except Tanganyika. The only reason for excepting Tanganyika is because of the Government's ruling that the former German mission properties be vested in an American corporation."

The reason for Government's attitude is that they prefer dealing with a mission organization of one country rather than with an international organisation. It must be remembered that Tanganyika was formerly a German colony,

and two world wars had produced a situation in Tanganyika which was more or less unique. The Government has also assumed the attitude thus far that German mission societies should not operate independently in the Territory. This is not too serious a problem now, since missionaries are recruited from various countries to work together under one organization. Always there is in the foreground the African Church. It might be well to state even here that the African Christians, particularly in the Northern Province, are eagerly working toward the goal of an autonomous church in order that they may not have to suffer the consequences of too close ties with any foreign mission. In this new era of missions, the indigenous church must have full liberty in expressing itself even with regard to missions, and therefore primary consideration must always be given to their point of view. As noted above, CYCOM will continue for the time being to administer the fields in Tanganyika. But there is no reason why to all intents and purposes the LWF-CWM may not be in full consultation and may eventually take over the full administration. Whether it will be wise at this time to raise the question of vesting the properties in the LWF may be debatable. As far as the actual working of the mission and the church is concerned, it doesn't seem as though it would be important who holds the properties legally, since they are held, after all, in trust for the indigenous church, and it may not be too long before they can be vested directly in the churches themselves.

As stated above, the great goal is a united Lutheran Church of Tanganyika which could then be composed of synods in the various areas who could deal more effectively with the internal matters among the various tribes.

What the future holds we do not know. We are well aware of ecumenical trends, and what they may lead to under the providence of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit we cannot foretell at this time. Africa is awakening and the doors are wide open for Christian missions. Mohammedanism threatens, even communism and, not

least, the many secularizing influences. The sending churches must realize that they still have great responsibilities toward the evangelization of Africa.

George N. Anderson

World-Service

First Year of LWF Department of World Service

During its first year the Department of World Service of the Lutheran World Federation has not only had the responsibility to carry forward the programs of its service to refugees, interchurch aid, and others, but constantly it was aware of the need to find patterns by which these programs could effectively be related to programs of the World Council of Churches and the many international governmental and voluntary agencies in the world today. Relying utterly and completely upon the guidance of the Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, we have tried in all humility to lay the foundations of the Department of World Service of the Lutheran World Federation. We are still very much in a formative period of the program. We are truly grateful for the patient understanding and the loyal support of the member churches and their agencies, as we seek to build together the Department of World Service of the Lutheran World Federation.

In order to supervise and guide the work of the Department, the Executive Committee elected a Commission on World Service consisting of the following: Dr. Paul C. Empie, USA, (Chairman), Pastor Henrik Hauge, Norway, (Secretary), Prof. Dr. Volkmar Herntrich, Germany, Dr. Harry Johansson, Sweden, Dr. Henry Schuh, USA. The Director submits regular reports to the members of the Commission, and there is considerable correspondence throughout the year between the office in Geneva and the members of the Commission.

As it began its work on May 1, 1953, the Department of World Service gave

immediate attention to the continuation of the program of services to refugees which had previously been carried forward by LWF-SR. This was an ongoing program, a program which had gained considerable momentum and recognition, not only among the member churches of the Federation but also in the wider circles of the World Council of Churches and the various international governmental and voluntary agencies in the field of service to refugees. The Department also began to supervise certain interchurch aid activities which had been transferred to it by several National Committees of the Federation. These National Committees had indicated their desire to transfer funds and responsibility for supervision of interchurch aid programs to the Department of World Service. The Department also was aware of its responsibility to give aid to the minority churches and churches in exile. Later, the Department began to initiate activities looking forward to the coordination of the solicitation and distribution of contributed goods.

Services to Refugees

There are three essential phases of an effective resettlement program, namely 1) ministry in the country of emigration, 2) liaison services with member churches, representation before intergovernmental and international voluntary agencies, loans for overseas transportation, 3) reception and resettlement services in the country of immigration. With respect to those services from the country of emigration, it is our belief that primary responsibility for this service should be carried by the indigenous church or its recognized agency. Following this policy, e.g. in Germany, the initial contact with all refugees is through Evangelisches Hilfswerk and its agency, the Beratungsstelle. During 1953, of all the emigrants who applied to the Evangelische Hilfswerk for help in emigration, only 20% were referred to LWF-WS for resettlement service.

With respect to the work of liaison among the member churches, representation before intergovernmental agencies as well as arrangements for overseas transportation, we feel that these are essential services which can be best performed by LWF-WS. LWF-WS is in constant communication with member churches in potential receiving countries, such as Australia, Canada, South America and the United States, in order to determine immigration opportunities from the point of view of employment, housing, as well as the ability of the churches in these countries to receive, and to offer adequate services to, immigrants. Another responsibility of LWF-WS is to represent the interests of member churches in the Lutheran World Federation before the various intergovernmental and international agencies which are active in the field of services to refugees, such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees of the United Nations, and the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration. The final phase of the resettlement program, namely, the reception and counselling services in countries of resettlement, is again obviously a responsibility of the indigenous church.

During the past year, we have sought to strengthen our resettlement program at several points. We have placed, e. g. on our staff in Germany, representatives of the churches in Australia, Canada, and the USA. Another interesting example of cooperation was the sending of a "dossier team" of seven workers from the US churches for a period of two months in Germany who personally interviewed emigrants who were interested in going to the USA under the Refugee Relief Act. A similar team from the Church of Sweden was brought to Trieste to interview refugees. Arrangements have been made with the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration, so that pastors from Australia would be placed on ships carrying refugees to Australia. During the long trip to Australia, refugees are now given pastoral care, and oppor-

tunities are present for interpretation and orientation into the church and community life of that country.

During the calendar year 1953 LWF-WS moved 5439 persons under its revolving travel loan plan, which is more than twice the number moved during the same period in 1952 when the figure was 2610. By far the largest number of migrants (4933) came from Germany, and the vast majority chose Canada as country of immigration (4540); the USA was next with the considerably lower figure of 355.

A brief word should be recorded here also on the work among the Arab refugees in Syria. Through generous contributions of funds, clothing and medical supplies, the member churches have enabled LWF-WS to carry forward a remarkable testimony to their love and compassion. Clinics for infants and mothers are in operation. Medicines are distributed and precious clothing is given to those who are desperately in need.

Interchurch Aid

Immediately after the war, the emphasis in interchurch aid was naturally on physical reconstruction of war damaged churches and church properties. This program has largely come to an end. The major building program now remaining is in Yugoslavia, where LWF-WS is assisting the churches in repairing buildings which are being returned by the Government. The German National Committee has reported that it no longer is requesting financial assistance for interchurch aid projects in the West zone, indicating its desire that all funds that may be available for Germany should be transmitted to the brethren in the East zone. Instead, it is now requesting men who are qualified to provide consultation to pastors and church groups in the general areas of stewardship, evangelism and congregational life. Two pastors are now on the staff of LWF-WS in Germany giving this consultative service.

Minority and Exiled Churches

The Executive Committee of the Lutheran World Federation at its meeting in Trondheim in August 1953, authorized the calling of a conference to study the diaspora question. This conference was held in Goeteborg, Sweden, in April 1954. It recognized four groups or elements which might be accepted as being included within the diaspora: 1) The group composed of those who are temporarily away from home country and church, employed in government or business, 2) the emigrants who are permanently leaving their home country; 3) seamen, whose calling requires them to be away from their home country and church for extended periods of time; 4) established independent Lutheran congregations which are not affiliated with any church. The conference agreed that the historical development of European churches has led to certain common problems which, at this time in history, the LWF may assist them in meeting; that the Church has a primary responsibility toward those who have been baptized into her fellowship and that the role of LWF is to assist a member church in meeting these responsibilities when such a church is not able to completely fulfil its responsibility and requests such assistance from LWF.

LWF-WS is also engaged in a study which will seek to give us accurate information on the extent of the problem of the churches in exile, so that we will know how many pastors are involved, the number of congregations, and the geographical distribution of the people. With this information at hand, we will be in a much better position to have more definite data on the extent of the problem, and we will be able to plan accordingly.

Coordination of the Solicitation and Distribution of Contributed Goods

The member churches of the Lutheran World Federation have made an impressive record in the gathering and

distribution of food products, clothing, and medicines throughout the last six years. These contributed goods have been sent to all parts of the world. At a conference which the Department of World Service called in May 1954 to discuss the need for continuing the programs for the solicitation and distribution of contributed goods and the role of LWF-WS in the total program, it was accepted that LWF-WS could fill a real need for the co-ordination of these programs of the member churches and their recognized agencies. Of primary importance to the successful operation of any program of coordination was the need for accurate and current information on the extent of needs as they may exist in various areas of the world. Moreover, it was recognized that any program for the solicitation and distribution of contributed goods which would be under the sponsorship of LWF-WS should be related very closely to the international voluntary and governmental programs.

Relationships with other Organisations

Inasmuch as most of the member churches of the Lutheran World Federation are also holding membership in the World Council of Churches, we recognize a responsibility to coordinate the work of LWF-WS with that of the Department of Interchurch Aid and Service to Refugees of the World Council of Churches. The very location of the Lutheran World Federation on the same campus as that of the World Council of Churches offers many opportunities for friendly and informal relationships between the two staffs of these agencies. During the past year, we also have continued the programs of joint representatives for WCC and LWF in Berlin and Hong Kong. The US Committee through LWF-WS has maintained its support of the Greek Village Team during the year. The other agency with which LWF-WS works very closely is the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration. In a recent report published by ICEM covering the period 1952/53, full

recognition is given to the role that voluntary agencies are playing in the resettlement of refugees, and the principle stated that only through this cooperative relationship between the governments of the world and international voluntary agencies can we hope to make the kind of impact upon the problem which is needed (cf. *Lutheran World I*, 1, p. 74 f). LWF-WS also is in frequent close contact with the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees of the United Nations. As is well known, this Office has been given mandates for certain groups of refugees in the world, and LWF-WS enjoys excellent cooperative relationships in study and service programs with the UNHCR. Of particular importance in recent years was the relationship with the UNHCR in connection with the grants from the Ford Foundation. The UNHCR was charged with the responsibility of administering Ford grants which were being made available to the various voluntary agencies. These grants have come largely to an end, but during this period Ford Foundation passed through the UNHCR a total sum of \$ 535,000 through LWF-WS for our projects in Germany, Austria, France, Canada, Australia and South America.

The organisation of the Department of World Service was a venture of supreme faith and love on the part of the member churches of the Lutheran World Federation. For the first time in the history of the Church of the Reformation, member churches from the four corners of the world have determined to serve together in meeting their common tasks and common responsibilities. Individual churches, for many years, have carried forward remarkable programs of service; but here now, they are demonstrating their desire to work together. Moving into this new area of world-wide co-operative work within the Lutheran World Federation, it was discovered that it was necessary to develop new patterns, new forms, for the creative expression of this love and faith which the member churches wish to bring to the world.

Henry J. Whiting

FROM LANDS AND CHURCHES

Germany

Rejoicing in Hope

Seldom in the recent years of church history has there been such a pronounced re-affirmation of the reality of the Christian hope as in this year 1954. From the distant Christian communities of Asia, Indonesia and Africa, across the divided frontiers of Europe, and the broad expanses of the American continents the theme of the Evanston Assembly has echoed and re-echoed: "Christ the Hope of the World." Very shortly, representatives of all these Christian communities will be gathering to give expression to their faith in this reality. Among those present will be many who have participated in the Sixth German Evangelical Kirchentag, held in Leipzig from July 7 to 11, under the theme: "Rejoice in Hope." Much more than a sub-theme of the Evanston Assembly, this admonition of the Apostle Paul to Christian men of all ages strikes the keynote with which men and women of the cross must approach both the life and time in which we live, and the glorious life which is yet to come. That a theme of such positive and optimistic character should be selected and carried through for the first Kirchentag to be held in Germany's "twilight zone" is one of the most significant aspects of this entire assembly. It had seemed at various times throughout the year of preparation for this Leipzig Kirchentag that its realization would not be possible, and indeed, from leaders and participants alike one hears almost without exception the expression of gratitude to God that such a miracle could take place.

That God's guidance and blessing have been combined to make this great experience possible, there is no doubt. But God has worked through the consecrated hands of men and women who have given unstintingly of their

time and strength. At the head of the Kirchentag movement, surely one of the most significant developments within the German Protestant Church since the war, stands Dr. Reinold von Thadden-Trieglaff, a layman with a deep conviction that the Christian faith must find expression in every area of human life. „Kirchentag“, says Dr. von Thadden, "are the living documents of our faith. They stand squarely in the stream of history, as well as in the contemporary scene. They embrace not only the festive occasions of our lives, but also the daily experiences of our earthly callings, in village and city, in home and family, in state and community, in artistic and scientific endeavors. They embrace our joys and our sorrows. They seek fellowship with the men of our time, and reach out at the same time for the merciful hand of God which sustains us even in the chaos of our century. If we are joyful in the assurance of our salvation through the death and resurrection of Christ, if we rejoice in the hope of the return of our Lord in glory, that does not imply for us any pious religiosity, any retreat into the unfruitful regions of asceticism, but rather a venture into the midst of human affairs, shouldering the responsibility which God has laid upon us."

At the head of the Committee on Preparations has been another layman, Reimer Mager, former trade-union leader and now lay-president of the synod of the Church of Saxony. Together with him and with the Kirchentag leadership itself, have worked hundreds of laymen and pastors, to accomplish the tremendous task of arranging program, accommodations, travel, and documentation for the thousands of participants who have streamed into Leipzig for these five days. In a land which has carefully allocated the production quotas for its workers in industry and agriculture, and has used drastic methods to enforce them, the preparation for the

Kirchentag by the church has been a triumphant demonstration of the power and productivity of voluntary cooperative Christian endeavor.

Frequently heard here in Leipzig has been the expression of gratitude to the officials of the East German state that they have granted permission for the holding of this assembly. No one questions the fundamental difference in ideology which separate the church and the state in the DDR and which in the future will necessarily and frequently be asserted by both; but during these days of Christian grace, gratitude speaks with single voice. Throughout Leipzig, as if borne along from the heart-warming welcome at the border-crossings sung to the east-bound travellers on board the special trains from West Germany, the spirit of friendliness and cordiality has held sway. One among the ten thousand West German visitors described her reactions as the little Evangelical congregation at the border village of Probstzella crowded the station platform, singing its welcome to the travellers crossing the erstwhile forbidding "iron curtain": It seemed as if for once the deep yearning of Christians in the East for the handclasp of their fellows in the faith had been satisfied in full measure. Kirchentag posters, brightly illuminated, cut through the darkness with their figures of Leipziger choirboys joining in the happy message of the hour: Rejoice in Hope!

This same spirit seemed to pervade Leipzig as well, even to the police on the street corners and the porters in the hotels. A pouring two-day rain failed to dampen the spirits of either hosts or visitors, though a special call was sent out for extra convention-guides, preferably equipped with rain-coats and rubbers, to allow respite for the faithful youth of the East Zone, whose single pair of shoes had no chance whatever to dry between down-pours. One of the high points of the entire Kirchentag for a few Americans was an encounter with a group of ten of these young people from Thuringia. As they stepped out of the Thomas

Church following an unforgettable presentation of Bach's St. John Passion by the famed Thomanerchor, the rain was falling heavily. But despite the rain and the cold, there was an exchange of word and song there on the streets of Leipzig which gave eloquent witness to the joy and gladness with which "Youth Congregations" of East Germany confess their faith and their Christian hope.

As in former years, the day's pattern of the Kirchentag centered about Bible study. A dozen groups, each assembling in one of the huge exhibition halls of the historic Leipziger Messe, were led by pastors and professors from East and West into peculiarly appropriate passages from the Book of Revelation. A world in the midst of a merciless and peaceless age was offered the sure promise of God that both mercy and peace—now and in eternity—are available in Jesus Christ, who died but lives again and will return one day in glory. If there were no other benefit brought to our day through the Kirchentag than the assembling of these thousands of people about God's Word, it would still be a precious gift to the Church. To anyone who believes that the Holy Spirit operates through God's Word as a means of grace, the witnessing of such masses of men with open Bibles and listening ears must fill his heart with praise and thanks to God. It is not only that great white flags with purple crosses stand all about the public squares of Leipzig or Hamburg or Berlin and dominate their acres of exhibition halls—but that the Holy Spirit is enabled under the shadow of these crosses to confront the men of our day with the message of Hope, which that Cross brings. It is true that some special sensations were awakened by the appearance of these Crosses in the midst of the immense caverns of the Soviet Pavilion where a portion of the assemblies were held—but more important than the drama of hearing hymns and canons sung echoing through such foreign corridors was the reality of God's Spirit at work through His Word.

On the foundation of their Bible study, an equal number of working groups moved on to interpret the Christian hope in relation to the great issues which men are confronting today:

"Who has the earth in his hand?"

"Christ's Kingdom of Peace"

"The form of this world passeth away"

"God's patience with the world".

As with other Kirchentage, the program for this Sixth assembly was richly studded with special events, such as youth and mission rallies, evangelistic meetings, prayer and communion services, film and dramatic presentations, and musical events. More than many another area, Leipzig is endowed with a rich heritage of church music. Here is the Thomas Church, where Johann Sebastian Bach played the organ and where he lies buried. Here his preludes and fugues still pour forth from the organ loft, and a world-renowned boys' choir sings his motettes and oratorios. Visitors at the Kirchentag could listen to both—and still have opportunity to hear superb music from the Dresdner Kreuz Chor and the Spandauer Kantorei besides.

When the Sixth Kirchentag finally was given its permission to meet in Leipzig, there were still many questions as to the participation of ecumenical guests. Even final success of this phase of the assembly does not obscure the fact that in spite of frequent reassurances, foreign guests gained access only after some difficulty. Invited delegates and other visitors from the USA, Great Britain, and France were able to enter the East Zone only after coming to Berlin and there securing a Russian visa for a return trip from Berlin to Leipzig. Those who travelled by automobile from Berlin to Leipzig had the frustrating experience of driving past the Castle Church in Wittenberg but being rigidly forbidden by the People's Police to drive one block off the highway to visit it. Some persons were detained at the border crossings several hours; three arrived two days late, and about a dozen were

turned back. Strangely, no delegation from Hungary was able to secure entry, and that from Czecho-Slovakia was delayed three days. At the Ecumenical Tea, 293 foreign guests were cited, with 70 Dutch and 57 Swiss the largest delegations. Twenty Americans attended and several representatives of the younger churches of Indonesia, Asia and Africa. The Lutheran World Federation was represented by six staff members.

In spite of the relatively small number of foreign guests present, this phase of the Sixth Kirchentag appeared to play a highly significant role among the participants, no doubt because of the normally isolated situation of the church in E. Germany. Together with the impact of the Bible study upon the tremendous crowds of people—and the Christian witness of these masses in a mass-conscious political environment—this miracle of an ecumenical experience in East Germany constituted the special character of the 1954 Leipzig Kirchentag. The iron curtain had been lifted, if only for a week, but long enough to let some of the rays of the joyous Christian Hope shine in and out. A half million bearers of the sign of the cross, thrillingly united, had brought again a joyous witness to the reality of that for which a mercy-starved and hope-hungry generation is groping still.

Richard W. Solberg

Iceland

Visit of the LWF Executive Secretary to the Church of Iceland

Iceland is not a cold country. Its name is certainly not appropriate to its people or its church. This ten-year-old republic with its 1000 year record of parliamentary government has a population of about 150,000 people. Both the coming of Christianity and the introduction of Reformation were imposed on the people from the outside, but both permeated the population after the initial resistance. The economy, depending as it does to an

extremely large extent on one industry, fishing, is yielding comparative prosperity and physical well-being. The phenomena of nature for a visitor from Switzerland are such that they leave a profound impression. The hot water springs, heating most of Reykjavik homes and business houses, the geyser, the waterfalls, and no trees, all deserve special attention.

This first visit of a representative from the Lutheran World Federation to the Church of Iceland was an occasion for coming in contact with church leaders and pastors. A word about this church. It is a state church similar in this instance to the relationship which exists in Scandinavian countries, with a minister for church affairs a member of the cabinet. The church is given ecclesiastical direction by one bishop with all pastors meeting annually in a Synod to discuss matters pertaining to church life. It is my understanding that this Synod can give recommendations to the government with respect to the affairs of the church. A theological faculty is set up in connection with the University of Iceland in Reykjavik, with four professors and about 30 to 40 students. There are some over a hundred pastors serving about 250 congregations. The only non-Lutheran group that one notices is a group of about 300 Roman Catholics with its church in Reykjavik — dominating the scene in size and location. There are two congregations of the Free Lutheran group with pastors coming from the faculty in Reykjavik and who are ordained by the Church of Iceland.

The events which prompted this visit was the installation of newly elected Bishop Dr. Theol. Asmundur Gudmundsson and the pastoral conference which followed. For the occasion of the consecration of a bishop the Church of Iceland has two auxiliary, or perhaps better stated installing, bishops who conduct the act in accordance with the established practices of reading the official act of his appointment, the service of consecration with a sermon from one of the auxiliary bishops giving the charge.

The new bishop then delivers his sermon followed by the Lord's Supper for the bishop, his family and the clergy who participate in the service. This latter practice was new to me. The singing in the cathedral services, both during this service of consecration and also at the installation of six pastors the following day and the worship service on the National Holiday, was spirited and had good congregational participation.

At the Synod of pastors the business of the meeting was similar to that of church meetings that I have attended in Indonesia, Australia, Germany, France and the USA. The subject matter dealt with the work of the church among seamen, alcoholics, the mentally ill, children. An irenic spirit prevailed in their discussions which I think was in part induced by the spirit of the new church leader. Opportunity was given to visitors from abroad to give greetings and present their lectures. I was happy to be able to present the work of the Lutheran World Federation to these interested pastors.

The Church in Iceland has deep roots in the life of its nation and people. The cultural and intellectual stimulus in this country came largely from the clergy and those in the church. The majority of poets and writers in the past have been theologians with a strong religious overtone. The hymns of one pastor and poet were largely responsible for the penetration of the Lutheran Reformation into the life and consciousness of the people. To have a recorded history of events and of families since the arrival of the first people in Iceland means that this country has a unique depository of historical materials. Naturally, they are strongly conscious of this history and are sensitive to the struggles, victories, achievements of their ancestors as they are recorded in saga, song and story. The fact that Iceland has been an independent republic for only ten years but has this rich record of history, gives a special place to the emphasis on tradition and ancestors. The Church has played a vital role in this history and still does today.

True enough, the elements that are apparent in western society generally with respect to the influence of the church on youth, students, workers and other social groupings are also present in this Icelandic situation. The influence of secularism both in newly urban Reykjavik and the countryside is sensed by the clergy and the faithful. Evidences of its increasing hold on people are described by earnest pastors. Such incidents as the presence of Allied troops both during and after the war with their freespending life plus the higher level of economic prosperity has given the new generation a totally new niveau unknown in Iceland before. The importation of other influences — music, literature, films — have, as in all other countries, had an effect upon youth, particularly, that is decried by the older generation. One high governmental official stated that his grandmother gave a prayer of thanks to God every time she ate a piece of bread because the extreme poverty made even a piece of bread a luxury. Now, however, this new generation has forgotten those times and also is apt to lose its sense of God's providence.

Among government officials one gets the impression that there is no anti-Christian or anti-clerical feeling. In fact the highly respected president Asgeir Asgeirsson has a theological training and, in common with most Icelanders, a high degree of intellectual and cultural interests. Incidentally, when I remarked to the president that one seldom met a head of state who had theological training, he reminded me that the late leader of one of the great powers of the world had been theologically trained, namely, Stalin. The Church still holds a strong place in the public and official life of the country. The observances for the national festival opened with a worship service. All the high government officials were present at the service of consecration of the bishop. A fairly large percentage of the people, however, are members of the Communist party or vote with the party in elections. It is difficult to find the real

reasons why such a large number of people—intellectuals and workers—should find an attraction in its appeal. I doubt that the appeal is primarily economic but that one would have to seek for other motivations.

It was surprising to me that the prevailing trends and tendencies of church life in Scandinavia and particularly Denmark had not played a larger role in the development of Iceland. I had wrongfully assumed that Iceland in its church life would be similar to Denmark. There are, as far as I can evaluate this from only a short visit, several reasons for this dissimilarity. The geographic separation of this country from the continent of Europe, the particular circumstances of the isolated rural life along the coasts, the character of the people, the reaction of this subject nation to the Danish Kingdom have all played a part in the development that is uniquely Icelandic. It would also be difficult to attempt a generalization of the theological trends within this country. The influences of earlier European theological thinking still are strong, and the later trends of Scandinavian theological research, or continental, are not evident to any discernible degree.

This church has been isolated to a great degree not because it wanted to be or because it has nothing to offer. I found keen interest in the life of other churches of the world. The isolation has largely been imposed by those outside, and I regret very much that LWF has not had a greater interest in this church. The United Lutheran Church in America has the closest contact with this church, due largely to the migration of Icelanders to the USA and Canada and the existence of a ULCA Icelandic Synod in North America. There are good contacts with churches in Scandinavia. My hope is that there can be a greater opportunity for exchange of students and younger pastors with both the European and American churches. I consider this as one of our chief responsibilities in the ecumenical organizations.

Let me conclude with a note of apology and appreciation. It is frustrating to try to generalize after a week's visit to a church, especially in a written statement. One must apologize for not being able to convey in writing the warm spirit of friendliness and understanding that I experienced on this visit as a guest of the Church. Much has been written in the Danish Church press of a positive nature that would give a more comprehensive understanding than this brief article. Our Iceland brethren need to give us much more information than we now possess. In appreciation to these friends, and especially to the new bishop, I can only say that it is fortunate for LWF that we have such a church as a member, and I can only hope that they feel the same about their association with LWF.

Carl E. Lund-Quist

Yugoslavia

Rebuilding Churches in Yugoslavia

Before the recent war the German population of Yugoslavia was 550,000. The estimates of the number of Germans today vary between 25,000 and 100,000. They are perhaps closer to 25,000. Even this number is diminishing due to the permission of the Government in 1954 that those Germans who have relations in the West may join them. Many are taking advantage of this and are leaving Yugoslavia. It is almost unnecessary to repeat that the diminished number of Germans is partly due to the Nazi occupation of Yugoslavia and its policies and consequences. Some Germans left Yugoslavia under the „Back to the Reich“ (Heim ins Reich) plans of the German propaganda, others followed the retreating German armies because they were collaborators, or were evacuated by these armies farther West. The majority of them, however, were removed to Austria and Germany as a consequence of the Potsdam Agreement even if it does not specifically mention Yugoslavia. It should also be pointed out that many died in the post-war reprisals.

Out of the 550,000 about 100,000 Germans were Lutheran. The Evangelical Church of Augsburg Confession had a membership of 128,000, of which about 25,000 were non-German speaking. (Slovenes.) This church after the war broke into 3 fragments organized as independent churches. (Lutheran Church of Croatia, Lutheran Church of Serbia, Lutheran Church of Slovenia.) The first two, numbering roughly 15,000 members, consist mostly of Germans even though German services are held only in few congregations. The Serbo-Croat and Hungarian languages predominate. Out of over 100 German pastors before the war there are only 3 left in Yugoslavia. There exists in fact no German Lutheran Church as such in Yugoslavia.

After the Germans left, the Yugoslav Government confiscated all church buildings owned by German congregations as German property. They were taken over, not because they were churches, but because they were alien enemy property. (An estimated 50 churches were taken over.) If the church building was owned jointly by German and some other language group it was not confiscated. These churches were partly given to other religious faiths for use, partly they are used as warehouses, or some even were demolished. Since 1950 the Government, in places where enough worshippers gathered, began to return the church buildings to the congregations.

The Yugoslav Government is a communist government. The attitude of Communism to religion is well known without its being repeated here. However, the Yugoslav Constitution guarantees religious freedom. A new law was passed regulating the relationship of Church and State. (See *Lutherische Rundschau*, Nov. 1953: „Die rechtliche Lage der Kirchen in Jugoslawien“, p. 425 ff.) Even if religion is considered a passing phenomenon, the government desires correct relations with the churches. The returning of church buildings is one of the proofs of the desire for this correct relationship.

This returning of churches is not automatic, i. e. the government does not

simply return a church where there is a large group of Lutherans. The groups, or national churches must submit a petition to the authorities for such a return, pointing out the need of a church building. The local authorities are often suspicious about a return of a church, especially where the pastor of the congregation collaborated with the occupation. They must be assured and convinced that the church building will not be used for anti-Yugoslav propaganda, etc.

These returned church buildings, since they were not used for worship for many years, are often in condition needing immediate repairs. Roofs have to be replaced, floors repaired, new pews, organs purchased, etc. The congregations are unable to cover the expenses of these repairs. Hence we have such a state of affairs in Yugoslavia that requests for church reparations are submitted to L.W.F.-W.S. When, in other countries, reconstruction programs are completed, in Yugoslavia they are just beginning.

On April 25 took place the dedication of the renovated church of Sarajevo. The church building, taken into custody by Government after the war as abandoned property, was also considerably damaged. At the withdrawal of troops of occupation a large ammunition depot near Sarajevo was blown up, which damaged the cupola, the walls and the windows. The cupola moved 3 ins. out of its position, the main wall leaned 6 ins. out of its straight position and there were six cracks in the walls. The church was used for 7 years as a storage room and the floors were damaged. The pews and other church furniture disappeared. The altar picture was, however, preserved.

On Dec. 21, 1951 the church was returned to the congregation numbering today about 300 baptized members. This means 300 not only in the city of Sarajevo but in the whole Southern Province and Herzegovina. The congregation belongs to the Lutheran Church of Croatia and Bosnia. Its language is now Serbo-Croat. This congregation is the southernmost outpost of Lutheranism in the Balkans.

The day of dedication was a festival of all the Lutherans in Yugoslavia. All the Lutheran churches sent their representatives. From outside of Yugoslavia were present representatives of the Lutheran World Service, the German and Danish National Committees, Martin Luther Bund, Gustav Adolf Verein. The congregation was greeted by other religious groups of Bosnia (Serbian Orthodox, Moslem, Jewish). On the next day a Bach Concert was held by the artists of the National Theatre and Conservatory of Sarajevo.

Another important church building returned is the church in Ljubljana, the capital of the Republic of Slovenia. After long negotiations the building was returned in Nov. 1953. In Ljubljana there is a great need of a Lutheran Church. Before the war there were only 250 Lutherans in Ljubljana whose language was German. Now there are about 400, consisting of the few Germans remaining and of Slovenian industrial workers who moved to Ljubljana after the war from the rural regions.

The church is in bad need of repair. It is under reconstruction now with the aid of L.W.F.-W.S.

There is a Lutheran Church in Belgrade still under confiscation. Steps are being taken for its return. It is hoped they will be successful. The capital of Yugoslavia needs a building where could be gathered the many Lutherans settled in Belgrade and vicinity, and also to serve the foreign colonies.

There is a great shortage of pastors in Yugoslavia. There are 96 Lutheran congregations in Yugoslavia and only 29 ordained pastors. The whole Lutheran Church of Croatia and Bosnia has only two ordained men for 22 congregations. The churches use lay preachers; otherwise religious work would suffer considerably.

We see at once that theological education is the most important problem of the churches of Yugoslavia. They never had a Theological Seminary or Theological Faculty. Before the recent war, the German theological students studied in Germany and Austria, the Slovaks in Czechoslovakia, the Slovenes and

Hungarians in Hungary. After World War II, these studies abroad were impossible. The churches were forced to make other arrangements.

To found a Lutheran Theological Seminary was impossible, due to lack of financial resources, space, but especially, due to lack of competent teachers. Some theological education, however, had to be provided. So it happened that Lutheran theological students enrolled at the Orthodox Faculty in Belgrade and the Roman Catholic Faculty in Ljubljana. Of course, they enrolled only for "neutral courses", such as Biblical Languages, Exegesis, Ancient Church History, Catechetics. They obviously would not study Systematic Theology and had no opportunity to study Reformation History or Lutheran Liturgics.

In Belgrade it was possible to secure three Lutheran lecturers, Lutheran pastors, who were accepted by the Orthodox Faculty and who are teaching Reformation History, Systematic Theology, and Practical Theology at the present moment, there are five Lutheran students at Belgrade, all of them from the Slovak Lutheran

Church. In a few years, all these will have graduated.

To send Lutheran lecturers to Ljubljana was impossible. The original plan was that after preliminary studies the students in Ljubljana would receive private training from older pastors, serving at the same time as vicars in the congregations. Before this could come into reality the Republic of Slovenia permitted the theological students to go abroad and study at a theological faculty in Germany. All the five students from Ljubljana were thus able to go to Germany. In addition, one student went from Croatia. The Theological Department of LWF prepared a plan of study for these young men. They are now attending lectures at the Theological Faculty of Erlangen and Göttingen. It is planned that they continue their studies at the Theological Faculty of Vienna.

Thus the rebuilding of the churches in Yugoslavia continues. Churches are being reconstructed, and pastors are being trained who will preach the Word of God and administer the Sacraments to the faithful gathering together.

Dr. Igor J. Bella

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Not very long ago a well known German church leader, whose name need not be given here, criticized a news service which in reporting certain LWF activities had used the term "ecumenical" in connection with the work of LWF. In his statement this church leader expresses the idea that to use the term "ecumenical" for the activities of one particular denomination was not only "incorrect but even misleading". "In church usage", he then goes on, "the word ecumenical refers to a form of being and acting which makes it quite clear that denominational as well as national separations between Christian communities have become relative and that the oneness of the body of Christ stands beyond these separations. In this sense the word is not applicable to confessionally limited church organizations, groups and federations, no matter how far-reaching their work may be".

Perhaps you are familiar with the fable about the man who had asked his tame bear to protect him against flies while he was resting. When finally a fly alighted on the man's head, the bear took a big stone and smashed the fly — but also the man's head. We do not want to allegorize; fables are usually parables not allegories. What we do want is to keep the ecumenical movement aloof from this kind of bear's services, especially because LWF has, in its constitution, stated that it will foster participation in the ecumenical movement. We also want to safeguard ourselves and all our friends in the ecumenical movement against thought which can speak of "national" and of "denominational" separations as on the same level and for which church unity is something "beyond" these separations. There would be no justification for calling this century in the history of our church an ecumenical one, if the ecumenical movement were something beyond the churches and if it were not the historical "confessional" churches who stand and pray for it.

To attempt unity by polemizing against these churches appears to us a strange procedure. What would appear even stranger by far, would be a church which, for the sake of unity, was to regard confession and doctrine as relative. For "doctrine" in the sense of the confessional documents of the churches means the truth of the Gospel. In so far as this truth is expressed in a historic form it is open to discussion and constant review. But because it is this truth for which we strive in the church, in which we live and worship, we are already "ecumenical" by the very fact that we are members of a particular church; one might even say that we cannot be ecumenical but by being members of this church. The idea of a truth embodied "beyond" the separations finds a stronger support in the philosophy of the Enlightenment than it does in the writings of the New Testament.

Our ecumenical concern in our churches, our Lutheran concern for the Church universal here on earth, these are what has led us in our preparation for Evanston, and this in turn has led us to publish some of the main contributions in the first two issues of the "Lutheran World". These papers are not meant merely as a "Lutheran contribution" and even less are they attempts to exert a special Lutheran influence on the Assembly of the churches at Evanston. They are nothing more but the way in which Lutheran theologians have been rethinking the great modern problems which will be placed before the delegates in the plenary sessions and the various sections of the great assembly. They should be discussed not as an expression of what Lutherans say today but of what Christians say; they should be discussed as attempts to express the truth of the Gospel, which is never "relative" in any of our churches, as long as this church is a church of Christ.

Hans Bolewski

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Olov Hartman was born in 1906 in Stockholm. After finishing school he studied theology and became a pastor. In 1948 he became Rector of the Sigtuna Foundation. Olov Hartman also is a well known novelist whose books are translated and read outside Sweden. His books *The Time of Grace*, *The Holy Masquerade* and his essays on "Art and Christianity" are as widely read as his volume of sermons *The Night Shines like the Day*.

Taito Almar Kantonen was born in Karstula, Finland in 1900 but came to the United States with his parents at the age of four. He attended the Theological Seminary of Suomi College, Hancock, Mich. and, later, University at Minnesota, Harvard and Boston. Since 1932 he has been professor for Systematic Theology at Hamma Divinity School of Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio and, since 1940, secretary of the faculty. *Resurgence of the Gospel* (1948) and *The Message of the Church to the World to-day* (1941) are among his publications. His recent studies on the problems of evangelism, one result of which is our present article, have been more extensively presented in *Theology of Evangelism* (Muhlenberg Press, 1954).

Edmund Schlink was born in 1903 in Darmstadt, Germany. After studying science, philosophy and theology at the Universities of Tuebingen, Munich, Kiel, Vienna, Marburg and Muenster, he became University Chaplain of the Technical University of Darmstadt. In 1934 he was appointed lecturer at the University of Giessen and in 1935 lecturer at the Theological School of Bethel, Germany. In 1946 he was called as professor for Systematic Theology and Director of the Ecumenical Institute of the University at Heidelberg. His principal publications are *Gesetz und Evangelium*, (1937), *Theologie der lutherischen Bekenntnisschriften* (1948), *Der Erhöhte spricht* (1948). In the church struggle, Prof. Schlink was one of the leaders of the Confessional Church, and he had several parishes and held other positions in the church.

Erich Thier began his career as a mechanic at the well known optical works of Carl Zeiss at Jena. Unemployed, he changed his profession and became a librarian, then studied social science and philosophy. After returning from a military prison in Russia he studied theology. He is pastor at Duesseldorf and, at the same time, lectures at the Evangelical Academy „Haus der Begegnung“ at Muelheim, Ruhr. He has now been appointed Director of the Evangelical Social Academy at Friedewald and will succeed Dr. Schweizer in this capacity this fall.

Vilmos Vajta was born in 1918 in Kecskemet, Hungary. He began his theological studies at the Theological Faculty at Sopron where he graduated in June 1940. After serving several Lutheran congregations in Hungary, he received a scholarship for Sweden in 1942 and studied at the Universities of Lund and Uppsala. In 1952 he became a Doctor of Theology and lecturer at the Theological Faculty of Lund University. His dissertation was on „Die Theologie des Gottesdienstes bei Luther“. In 1953 he became Director of the newly established Department of Theology of the Lutheran World Federation.

Reports and Reviews have been written by Dr. George N. Anderson (General Director of CYCOM in Tanganyika), Henry J. Whiting (Director of the Department of World Service of the Lutheran World Federation), Dr. Carl E. Lundquist (LWF Executive Secretary), Dr. Igor J. Bella (Senior Representative of Lutheran World Service for European Minority Churches), Dr. Richard Solberg (Senior Representative of Lutheran World Service in Germany), Dr. Hans W. Gensichen (Lecturer at Gurukul Theological College, Madras).

